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# WSG Financial

## *focus*

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF OUR CLIENTS AND PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE.

## Buy or Sell?

**For many investors this is the time to pick up quality stocks at attractive prices.**

*“The lower things go, the more I buy.”*

Warren Buffett

This statement in a recent article in Fortune magazine with Warren Buffett emphasizes his buy and hold approach to investing. Even if you don't agree with his philosophy, you have to admit that some stocks are currently undervalued and for many investors, offers an opportunity to obtain quality stocks at attractive prices.

The “Sage of Omaha” once said that you should “only buy something that you would be perfectly happy to hold if the market shut down for 10 years.” The stock market is definitely a long-

term proposition and with stocks in the S&P 500 trading at a forward price-to-earnings ratio of around 12, we now have a buyer's market.

The ripple effect from the falling oil prices may bode well for equities. On August 12th, oil settled at \$85.38 a barrel on the NYMEX as compared to \$100 a barrel in February. These price cuts can help strengthen the U.S. economy with better corporate profits and lower energy costs.

What other factors could determine the way the markets are going? One large factor could be the pledge by the Federal government to keep the federal

funds rate at near-zero levels through mid-2013. This may help volatility to slow when institutional investors decide whether or not that move will actually improve America's GDP.

Bears are arguing that we don't have enough job creation in the U.S. to drive stock prices back up. On the other hand, Bulls are arguing that the DJIA is relatively strong. They also feel that Ben Bernanke's approach will succeed. Low interest rates will encourage businesses to borrow and expand which will result in more consumer income and increased spending. In fact, some corporations are generating decent or better profits and carrying a lot less debt than

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**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2011 - 9:30 a.m.**

## **Estate Planning & Trust Education**

**Location: Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union Headquarters**

**12820 Wisteria Drive, Germantown MD**

*Co-sponsored by Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union*

Join us to learn strategies that can help you avoid probate, save taxes and more. If you own titled assets and want your loved ones to avoid court interference at your death or incapacity, consider attending this informative seminar. If you are a trustee on a trust, this is a great opportunity to learn about your responsibilities.

**Call 301-990-4395 or email [wsg@natplan.com](mailto:wsg@natplan.com) to reserve your seat!**

# Cruise With WSG...

*Join us on a cruise to  
Bermuda in May 2012!*



Grab your passport and join your Wealth Strategies Group team on a cruise to beautiful Bermuda! Our ship, Royal Caribbean's Enchantment of the Seas, will depart from the port of Baltimore on May 11, 2012 for a six day cruise that will return the morning of May 17th. We would love to have you join us and have reserved a number of interior, exterior and balcony rooms at a special group rate.



The staterooms will be available from \$760 to approximately \$1450 per person, based on double occupancy and depending on the type of room you request. You will be responsible for any gratuities and any incidental charges or fees.

On board ship, we will host a cocktail reception for everyone to meet each other. In addition, Patrick will host educational seminars on the mornings of May 12 and May 16. You are welcome to attend either one or both sessions.

Our group will have the 8:30 p.m. dining shift and you will be able to sit with other WSG clients. Once we dock in Bermuda, your time is your own and you can tour the island and visit the sites at your own pace.

To reserve your space on the WSG Bermuda Cruise, please call Royal Caribbean International at **1-800-465-3595**, ext. **13411** and tell the vacation specialist our group number is **1202739**.

If you are interested in joining us, please call the cruise line prior to October 1, 2011 as we have locked in the current rates until that time. After October 1, the rates are subject to change and you may have to pay a higher fee. Please call Cecelia Kirchman at 301-990-4395 if you have any questions or need additional information.

## Buy or Sell?

*Continued from page 1.*

they did just a few years ago. So what does this all mean? Markets eventually rebound so the low prices won't last forever. Lower prices on quality stocks could translate into some excellent long-term opportunities. Whether you believe in dollar-cost averaging or something more hands-on, patience and longevity could be the answer.

When you recall how quickly we came back from the 2007-2009 bear market, you don't want to miss out on the potential opportunities. As always, please feel free to call our office if you have any questions or comments.

## Welcome Tom Clements

We would like to welcome Tom Clements of Cremen, Clements and Associates to the WSG team. Tom will be working as our Pension Consultant. He has over 30 years of experience in the pension administration field and has experience in establishing all types of retirement plans. We are pleased to be able to offer our clients this new level of service, thanks to Tom's experience.



## Pat's Comments

As we head into the fall months with cooler temperatures and less humidity, we hope to see less volatility in the markets. Looking at the last 3 months, we see that NASDAQ and the Dow both logged their third straight down month.

How will September play out? Some bearish analysts are speculating that a double-dip recession is forthcoming or already here. However, on a more positive note, energy prices are lower, corporate profits have improved, we've had decent job generation and the bullishness in the stock market may provide a lift for equities. In addition, the Commerce Department reported that U.S. retail purchases increased by 0.5% in July—the highest gain since March.

On another optimistic note, according to the National Association of Realtors, pending home sales were up 2.4% in June while construction spending improved 0.2% in June for a third straight monthly gain.

According to Freddie Mac's August 18th Primary Mortgage Market Survey, average interest rates on a 30-year fixed rate mortgage are at a low 4.15%.

How do you cope with the market during the rough weeks we have just experienced and that we will no doubt experience again in the weeks to come?

One word... patience.

*P.S. I hope you will consider joining us in May 2012 on our cruise to Bermuda. Julie and I are looking forward to a relaxing and enjoyable trip and hope to be able to share the experience with you.*

# Estate Planning Checklist

*Here's a list of to do's you don't want to put off.*

## What is Estate Planning?

Estate Planning in a nutshell means deciding how your money and assets will be distributed after your lifetime. You don't want to leave your heirs with potentially expensive headaches linked to probate and ambiguity. Here is a short checklist to help you get started.

### Do you have a will or trust?

It is amazing how many people never get around to writing a will or having a trust drafted. If you don't have a will you could be leaving behind a legacy of legal headaches to your survivors.

### Do you have durable financial and medical powers of attorney and living will documents?

These important documents can help if you become incapacitated or otherwise unable to make decisions. A living will makes your wishes known when it comes to life-prolonging medical treatments.

### Who are your beneficiaries?

If you're not sure who the beneficiary is

on your IRA, your 401(k), your annuity or your life insurance policy, it's time to check your documents and verify who the designated beneficiary is. We recommend that you review your beneficiaries every few years.

### Create a list of your assets and debts.

Provide your heirs with a list of your real estate, it's current value and a listing of your personal property and where it is. Add to that list a detail of your bank and brokerage accounts and finally a list of your credit card debts, mortgage information and any other outstanding loans.

### Are there charities that you want to support?

Let your heirs know the charities and organizations that mean the most to you. You may want to suggest donations to a particular charity or organization in lieu of flowers.

### Select a reliable executor.

Some points to consider are: Is there a

possibility that your executor might die before you do? How well do they comprehend financial matters? Make sure your executor has copies of your will and any other documents such as power of attorney, health care power of attorney and a list of your assets and debts.

### Speak to a qualified legal or financial professional—one with experience in estate planning.

WSG will work with you to create your estate plan and have you work with our attorneys to ensure you have the critical documents you need.

For more information on Estate Planning, wills, trusts and other critical documents, consider attending our *Estate Planning and Trust Education Workshop* on **Saturday, September 10 at 9:30 a.m.** Additional details are on page one of this newsletter.

*Representative is not an attorney, does not draft estate planning documents, and may only serve to coordinate an overall estate plan. Estate planning can involve a complex web of tax rules and regulations. You should consider the counsel of an experienced estate planning attorney or other professional before implementing any strategy.*

## The Best and the Worst States for Retirees

*Thinking of moving when you retire?*

What makes a state an ideal place for retirement and what makes other places a potential disaster? There are several personal choices that make some places more attractive than others such as where your family lives. But there are some more objective and measurable factors to use to determine whether a state is a good or bad place for retirees. In a recent survey, MoneyRates.com used the following factors to determine the 10 best and worst states for retirement: economic factors; climate; crime rate; and life expectancy. MoneyRates.com's list of the 10 worst states? Arkansas, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Maryland, South Carolina, Alaska, Michigan and Nevada.

Looking at another perspective, TopRetirements.com's recent list of the ten worst states for retirement include Illinois, California, New York, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Ohio, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Nevada. This list used three criteria: climate, taxation (including property taxes and social security) and the State's fiscal health. Keep in mind that what you are looking for in retirement may not be included on either list. Other factors to consider include: health care, recreational opportunities, transportation, cultural resources, social, political or religious concerns and possibly the number one reason for choosing a place to retire: proximity to family. There are many criteria to consider when selecting a state to retire to and these lists are at best, only a starting point.

Now that we've looked at the worst states, what states are rated as the best? In 2009, TopRetirements.com listed the 10 best states to retire to as: Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, California, Arizona, Texas, Colorado, Oregon and Delaware. Do you see the similarities? What can you learn from these studies? First, make up your own list of requirements and then use this list to narrow down the areas that are most appealing. You may discover that you are exactly where you want to be!

Securities and advisory services offered through NATIONAL PLANNING CORP. (NPC), Member FINRA/SIPC, a Registered Investment Adviser. WSG, and NPC are separate and unrelated companies.

Opinions voiced are for general information only. They are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. Please remember that investment decisions should be based on an individual's goals, time horizon, and tolerance for risk. Securities are not NCUA insured, have no financial institution guarantee and may lose value.

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## UPCOMING SEMINARS

**September 10 - 9:30 a.m.**  
**Estate Planning & Trusts**

*Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit Union  
Germantown, MD*

**September 20 - 7:00 p.m.**  
**Life Story Writing with  
Kevin Quirk**

*WSG Offices, 2099 Gaither Rd., Suite 110,  
Rockville, MD*

**October 25 - 7:00 p.m.**  
**Tax Strategies**

*Location to be determined*

To register, please call 301-990-4395  
or email [wsg@natplan.com](mailto:wsg@natplan.com).

Seminar locations and dates are subject to  
change, always check with our office for the  
most up-to-date information.

## Client Spotlight

### Marshall & Karen Micheals

*In this issue, we want to introduce you to  
Marshall Micheals and Karen Kalantzis.*

Karen Kalantzis is the CEO and majority owner of Corporate Network Services, (CNS) a people-friendly, service-oriented, computer consulting, managed services company. Her husband, Marshall is Vice President of Business Development.

Karen and Marshall started CNS, on a dare, in 1993. And here they are almost 18 years later, owners of a very successful business but still taking time to be active volunteers in their community and with their children's activities.

Marshall coaches youth basketball and is active in Poolesville High School's booster club. He also enjoys playing hockey. In addition to her love of travel, reading, and shopping, Karen is taking language lessons at a Greek school. As a teenager, she attended Greek School but lost interest and stopped taking classes. Now as an adult, she sees the benefits of learning the language and is enjoying the experience. Her daughter is also taking lessons at the same school.

Health and community are also very important to Marshall and Karen. They initiated a wellness program for their employees to help them live a more healthy lifestyle believing that healthy and mentally fit employees provide the best possible support to their clients. They also support giving back to their community and have started a Community Counts program within CNS where they support a number of charities in the local area.



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