

The Market Week in Review

For Week Ending May 30, 2015

THE MARKETS

The stock market ended the month of May on a sour note. The holiday-abbreviated week began and ended with volatile trading as the S&P 500 closed lower by 0.88 percent. Interest rates declined for a second week in a row and bond prices moved higher, and the yield on the 10 Year Treasury Note closed the week at just 2.1 percent. Crude oil sank below \$57 a barrel during the week before a report on Friday indicated that the U.S. rig count fell by 13 in the past five days. That led to a 4.5 percent rally and a closing price of \$60.20. Even with the rebound in oil prices, the price of stocks making up the energy sector moved 2.5 percent lower. Meanwhile, gold slipped back below \$1,200 an ounce in the wake of the dollar which regained strength this week.

Index	Started Week	Ended Week	Change	% Change	YTD %
DJIA	18,232.02	18,010.68	-221.34	-1.21%	1.05%
Nasdaq	5,089.36	5,070.03	-19.33	-0.38%	7.05%
S&P 500	2,126.06	2,107.39	-18.67	-0.88%	2.36%
Russell 2000	1,252.22	1,246.53	-5.69	-0.45%	3.47%

DAILY DEVELOPMENTS

MONDAY

Markets were closed on Monday for the Memorial Day holiday.

TUESDAY

The sale of new homes in the U.S. rose an annualized 6.8% to 517,000 in April, and prices also increased, the Commerce Department said on Tuesday. The median sales price increased 8.3 percent from April 2014 to \$297,300, the report showed. The supply of homes at the current sales rate fell to 4.8 months from 5.1 months in March.

Contact Us

- Our Website:
www.estatecounselors.com
- Our E-mail:
firm@estatecounselors.com
- Our Phone Number:
(262) 238-6996
- Our Address:
414 N. Main Street
Thiensville, WI 53092

Data found in a second report released Tuesday by the Commerce Department indicated that orders for non-military capital goods excluding aircraft advanced 1 percent after a 1.5 percent gain in March. The indicator is viewed widely as a proxy for future business spending.

The S&P/Case-Shiller index of property values in 20 cities increased 5 percent in March from the same time last year. Nationally, prices rose 4.1 percent from March 2014 while prices surged by 36.8 percent in the Midwest.

The Conference Board's consumer-confidence index increased to 95.4 in May from a revised reading of 94.3 the month before, the New York-based private research group said.

WEDNESDAY

There were no major economic announcements on Wednesday.

THURSDAY

New applications for unemployment benefits increased by 7,000 for the most recent weekly reporting cycle to a seasonally adjusted 282,000, the Labor Department said Thursday. The four week average rose 5,000 to 271,500. The total number of people receiving benefits increased 11,000 to 2.22 million.

The National Association of Realtors said Thursday that its seasonally adjusted pending home sales index climbed 3.4 percent to 112.4 last month. That marks the fourth consecutive monthly gain and puts the index at its highest level since May 2006. The report is welcome news after last week's report from the same group that sales of existing homes declined between April and March to an annual pace of 5.04 million.

FRIDAY

The total value of all goods and services produced by the U.S. economy (referred to as "gross domestic product" or "GDP") declined during the first quarter of 2015 by 0.7 percent. The government had previously estimated that GDP had grown by 0.2 percent. Even still, the revision was 0.1 percent better than many economists had been expecting. The pullback was the third time that economic activity had posted a quarterly contraction since the current recovery began in mid-2009. This time, unusual factors affecting the revision include last year's unusually harsh winter in much of the country and a decline in net exports caused by the strike in March at several ports on the West Coast. The Federal Reserve also suspects that GDP estimates may be skewed by the method that Commerce Department statisticians account for seasonal variations.

Also on Friday, the University of Michigan announced its index of consumer sentiment dropped to 90.7 from 95.9 in April. The May reading was the lowest since November. Consumer's assessment of current economic conditions weakened in May to 100.8, while inflation expectations increased 0.2 to 2.8 percent in response to rising gasoline prices, which are up 5 percent since April.

TIDBITS

Nearly one-third of U.S. workers have no pension or retirement savings, according to a Federal Reserve survey. Of more than 5,800 respondents, 38% intend to work as long as possible or do not plan to retire.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“You can’t fall if you don’t climb. But there’s no joy in living your whole life on the ground.”
- Unknown

I hope you have found the information in this week’s market summary helpful. If you would like to comment on any of the information found in this week’s Market Commentary please e-mail me at awillms@estatecounselors.com. If you would like to discuss how current market conditions could impact your investments, please feel free to call me at the number listed below.

Best regards,

Andy

Andrew J. Willms, J.D. LL.M.

Estate Counselors, LLC
414 N. Main Street
Thiensville, WI 53092
Phone (262) 238-6996
Fax (262) 238-6999
www.estatecounselors.com

Important Disclosures: The information and statistics in this e-mail have been obtained from sources we believe to be reliable but are not guaranteed by us to be accurate or complete. Any and all earnings, projections, and estimates assume certain conditions and industry developments, which are subject to change. The opinions stated are those of Estate Counselors, LLC, but are not intended to be a substitute for personal investment advice. Services provided by Estate Counselors, LLC do not constitute legal services and are not being provided by Willms, S.C. law firm. Communications between Estate Counselors, LLC and its clients are therefore not covered by the attorney-client privilege, and as a result may be discoverable by third parties. All such communications are, however, covered by Estate Counselors, LLC's privacy policy, a copy of which is available on request. *Please let us know in a reply to this e-mail if you have received this message in error, or would like to discontinue receiving it.* Thank you.
