

The Market Week in Review

For Week Ending March 17, 2018

THE MARKETS

A rise in stock prices on Friday was not enough to cover the losses earlier in the week as major indices finished the week down over 1.00%. Long term treasury yields also moved lower in response to lackluster economic data. As a result, the yield curve (which measures the spread between the rates paid on short term vs. long term bonds) flattened. Many consider a flat or inverted yield curve (where interest rates paid on short-term treasuries surpass the rates being paid on longer-term bonds) a reliable indicator that a recession is looming. Gold prices dropped approximately 77 basis points to \$1,314 an ounce, while crude oil prices increased approximately 22 basis points to \$62.21 a barrel. The U.S. Dollar Index slightly rose above the 90 level to 90.21.

Index	Started Week	Ended Week	Change	% Change	YTD %
DJIA	25,335.74	24,946.51	-389.23	-1.54%	0.92%
Nasdaq	7,560.81	7,481.99	-78.82	-1.04%	8.38%
S&P 500	2,786.57	2,752.01	-34.56	-1.24%	2.93%
Russell 2000	1,597.14	1,586.05	-11.09	-0.69%	3.29%

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

- The Consumer Price Index had modest growth for the month of February at 0.2%, in line with expectations. The core index, excluding food and energy, also resulted in a 0.2% increase for the month.
- The Producer Price Index increased 0.2% in February, as expected, with much of the increase coming from a rise in the cost of services. Excluding food and energy from the index yielded a 0.4% increase in producer prices, slightly higher than expectations.

Contact Us

• Our Website:
www.estatecounselors.com

• Our Email:
firm@estatecounselors.com

• Our Phone Number:
(262) 238-6996

• Our Address:
414 N. Main Street
Thiensville, WI 53092

- Retail sales dropped for a third consecutive month in February at -0.1%, with expectations at a 0.4% increase. However, January's reading of -0.3% was also revised upward to -0.1%.
- Jobless claims fell by 4,000 for the week of March 10th to 226,000. The four week average of initial claims also decreased to 221,500, approximately 7,000 less than a month ago.
- The Philly Fed's General Business Condition Index fell in March to 22.3 from 25.8 in February. Despite the decrease in the index it still remains at a very strong level above 20.
- The housing market slowed down in February as housing starts declined 7.0% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.24 million units. Building permits also dropped 5.7% in February to 1.30 million units, much lower than expectations.
- U.S. industrial production jumped 1.1% in February for the largest jump in four months. Much of the increase came from a rebound in mining, oil, and gas output. Manufacturing output also rose 1.2% in February and was largely driven by the increase in production of business equipment and construction supplies.
- Job openings surged to 6.3 million in January, 501,000 higher than the month prior. However, the December job openings reading also had a 144,000 downward revision. Despite the downward revision, job openings remain approximately 729,000 higher than hires, indicating that employers have a lot of jobs to fill.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“People will generally accept facts as truth only if the facts agree with what they already believe.”

- Andy Rooney

We hope you have found the information in this week's market summary informative. If you would like to comment on any of the information found in this week's Market Week in Review please email us at firm@estatecounselors.com. If you would like to discuss how current market conditions could impact your investments, please feel free to call us at the number listed below.

Best regards,

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 The Market Week in Review 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 if you would like to discontinue receiving it. Thank you.
