

INVESTMENT FORUM AGENDA FOR WEDNESDAY, April 9, 2014, 11:50AM, TA-1

The Forum will meet at 11:50AM through May 14

Market Perspective. It was shaping up to be a pretty good week, until 11AM on Friday. Wham! The DOW and S&P still ended the week up 0.5% and 0.4%, and the NASDAQ down 0.7%. And little change YTD.

Weather. The cold Winter has been cited as a reason for many weak economic indicators in the first quarter. Is that a convenient excuse, not backed by solid economic data? Reliable data shows that the cold weather and snow has had a significant impact on economic activity, as it did for previous cold and snowy years. I will share some of those numbers, and what they mean for the remainder of 2014.

Real Estate. Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which are publicly traded securities that own real estate, have been discussed in the Forum. But we have not talked about direct ownership of real estate.

Ed Swoboda will discuss investment in commercial real estate - office buildings, warehouses, industrial buildings, shopping centers, etc.

At a later session, I would like to discuss investment in residential real estate. Houses, condos, or townhouses, that are purchased for investment, rented out, and eventually sold. If you own (or previously owned) residential real estate for investment (you have never lived in the unit) and are willing to discuss the pros and cons, please advise me.

Fund Indexes (cont.) This week's *Barron's* feature article was on "smart indexes," which could have been a continuation of our discussion of fund indexes from last week. New indexes will continue to proliferate. For investors willing to understand them, they represent an opportunity to easily (and cheaply) implement investment strategies and choices.

Time permitting, I will look at the Russell indexes. The Russell 50, 200, 1000, 2000 and 3000. For most of these indexes, Russell further breaks them down in value and growth. And

we can compare these against each other, and see which do better.

Stock of the Week (from the Buy/Sell List.)
Starbucks (SBUX.)

Forum Moderator needed for April 23 and May 7. Got something you particularly want to discuss? This is your opportunity! I will distribute the agenda and can help prepare it.

Future Forum Topics

Panel on Energy April 30. We will discuss energy on April 30. Several of us attended an AALL class on the energy sector, presented by Elliott Gue on January 18, 2014. Mr. Gue's presentation provided some eye-opening information on energy production in the US, which may be a game-changer for domestic manufacturing and business activity.

If you attended the Gue presentation, or if you are watching the energy sector and want to participate in the panel, please advise me.

Investing with Grandchildren. On May 14, Burgess Levin will lead a panel on investing with grandchildren. Among the questions addressed will be: how to make the process fun; how much money is needed to make the process meaningful; how to involve the parents; how to do it with grandchildren who live outside the area; and how to embed the process and turn grandchildren into investors for life.

If you invest with your grandchildren and are willing to share your experiences, please advise Burgess (burgess.levin@live.com) or me.

Buys and Sells (two weeks ending 4/2/2014)

Buys

Global X Social Media ETF (SOCL)
AT&T (T)
Starbucks (SBUX)

Gilead (GILD)

Private placement bond in non-profit organization

Foot Locker (FL)

Sells

Market Vectors Russia ETF (RSX)

Blackberry (BBRY)

Suncor Energy (SU)

Six Flags (SIX)

Vanguard REIT Index ETF (VNQ) - option exercised

3D Systems (DDD)

Teva Pharmaceuticals (TEVA)

Thinking About . . .

Masco Corporation (MAS) - home improvement products. Market Cap \$8B

Monsanto (MON) - sell

Canadian National Railway (CNI)

Starbucks (SBUX)

Middleby Corp (MIDD) - restaurant equipment.

Market cap \$4.9B.

Closed-End bond funds selling at a discount

Al Smuzynski

Investment Forum Moderator

asmuzynski@verizon.net