



### *Travel Plans*

*By Amy Parrish,  
AWMA®, Senior Financial Advisor*

#### BEACH REVIEW

I'm a beach person, coming from a long line of beach lovers who hit the beach early and leave late. Fortunately, I married a beach, boat, and water lover, and my kids enjoy the beach too.

This summer, we returned to Orange Beach, Alabama, which we first visited in 2023. I can't remember exactly how we found our way there, but I think I was looking for good accommodations in the area. My husband then realized he had a friend living near Orange Beach. Once we made that connection, we quickly made reservations since his friend was organizing fishing trips for our family. Orange Beach is situated between Perdido Key, Florida, and Gulf Shores, Alabama. You may have heard of Flora-Bama, a popular restaurant and beach bar on the Florida-Alabama line. Although Orange Beach is small, there is plenty to do, including numerous restaurants, shopping, family activities, boating, and fishing.

Both times, we stayed at Romar House Condominiums. I ensured we were on the first floor because I learned from a childhood trip that I dislike dealing with elevators at the beach. There are many condominiums at Orange Beach, and some stretches of beach with just homes. The beach wasn't overly crowded, except on July 4th when it was packed, as expected. That evening, we sat on the beach with friends and many strangers, watching fireworks from Gulf Shores, Perdido Key, a barge, and, as one friend commented, "just regular pedestrians on the beach."

About a mile from our condo was an entrance to Gulf State Park. It's an expansive, well-maintained park with 6,150 acres and 28 miles of trails. It includes a fishing pier, beach access, a free bike share program, a lake, and a nature center. I had a great time exploring the park while getting some  
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## Communication is Key

By Kevin D. Johnson, LUTCF, CPIA  
Johnson Insurance Services, Inc

### HANDLING AN INSURANCE CLAIM

I have been in the insurance business for 40 years and have taken care of hundreds of claims for other people but never myself. All that changed last November when we had a house fire due to my golf cart located on the first floor. I was home at about 9:30am taking a shower when my Border Collie came into the bathroom and was acting very nervous. I got out of the shower, threw on some clothes, and headed to other side of house. Smoke was coming through the hardwood floors and then the fire alarm detected fire in zone 5 of house. I went downstairs and felt the door to our golf cart room. When I opened it, black smoke billowed out. I dialed 911 and took my dog outside as no one else was home. The fire trucks arrived within several minutes and the fire was fortunately contained to that room, but we were out of our home for five months from water and smoke damage. Our insurance paid for clean-up, repairs, living expenses and new furniture as well as other items lost by fire, water and smoke damage. To say it was a process would be an understatement, however, I have great insurance and an excellent agent (myself).

My personal story solidifies the advice I have always given to clients. Dealing with a total (or partial) loss to your home or business is stressful enough; luckily, there are things that you can do before and during claim that can alleviate some of the headache. Thorough documentation and open communication are crucial for insurance claims; it can both accelerate the process and ensure that you receive the payment that you deserve. Here is a recommended approach that anyone can implement:

#### Personal Property Inventory

Create a detailed list of your possessions. Go room by room, taking photos or videos of each item.

- Note the brand, age and condition of appliances, electronics and furniture.
- Take particular note of high dollar or valuable items. If you own a business, be sure to keep a detailed list of specialty equipment. Be aware that items like jewelry, fine arts, or specialty equipment may need to be specifically listed on your policy and, in some cases, may require a separate policy (such as a "Fine Arts" or "Inland Marine" policy) to cover these items appropriately.
- Include receipts if possible, or research similar items online. To make things easier, use a price-scanning app and create a list of new items and prices.

#### Important Documents

Maintain a comprehensive file that includes insurance policies, correspondence with the insurance company, estimates, invoices, receipts, and any other relevant paperwork.

#### Communication With Your Agent

Communication is key during a claim. Oftentimes, an insurance company will correspond with the insured without alerting the agent. While the agent should be checking in regularly, an insured should also be contacting their agent after any important correspondence with the insurance company or if any questions arise.

Being meticulous in your documentation and communication ensures you're fully compensated for your losses. Had we as a family not been this meticulous, we would not have been made whole after our experience. If you would like to learn more about loss control and risk mitigation, please contact your agent or our risk management experts at Johnson Insurance Services.

## Operations

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Client convenience and client protection are two vital components of HTP operations. Having said that we have all seen the numerous media reports regarding the US Postal Service and you might have had issues receiving mail on a timely basis. While not an official policy of ours, we are encouraging all clients to avoid sending or requesting documents and checks through the postal system.

Three solutions we offer for that convenience and protection are:

1. Bank transfer of funds. If a client would like a deposit or withdrawal from their investment accounts, we can establish on-demand transfer instructions with their bank account(s) so that funds can be electronically transferred with just a quick phone call to our office.
2. Electronic signatures. Any forms that need client signature, we can email them a completed form(s) for quick and easy electronic signature(s) where there would be no need to print paper forms.
3. Document retention. All statements, reports, and tax documents are retained in client accounts and can be easily accessed from the client online portal at any time which can be saved or printed by the client if needed.

## Technology Corner

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**LPL Account View:** Our online account access platform now offers an app which makes user access much easier and more efficient. With the Account View app, you can access your balance, account statements, tax statements, and much more account information all from your smartphone. The app can be downloaded from the App Store for iOS and Google Play for Android devices.

*\*Users must be on the new Account View 2.0 to access the app. Account View 2.0 has an updated, more user-friendly interface and more capabilities than the old version of Account View. If you are not on Account View 2.0 and you would like to migrate over to the new version, let us know and we will be happy to help!\**



**RV Parks & Campgrounds:** RV Parks & Campgrounds is an app that provides information on RV parks in North America. In addition to parks and campgrounds, the database also includes gas stations, rest areas, and stores. Each campground includes detailed descriptions, directions, website links, and even photos for most. Reviews are also included on some of the locations. This app is free.

## Tracking Your Progress

By Founding Partner Chris Caldwell,  
CFP®, AIF®, AEP®, CRC®, MBA, ChSNP

### Goals vs. Targets

Even as a terrible golfer, I am going to use golf references to start my explanation. When a casual golfer loads their clubs on the cart, many times their goal for the day might be to shoot a score lower than their last round. Okay, that makes sense. What would make that actually happen though, and why do so many fail to make that goal a reality? Targets! Not the holes on the greens, but small successes throughout the round...targets.

I have used golf coaches to work on my swing plane, my hip turn, my club grip, blah, blah, blah. I will never practice enough to be a “really good golfer,” but I hit the ball well enough to post better scores than I do. A friend told me one day that I am so disciplined in setting goals and targets to reach those goals in other areas of life, including helping clients, why do I not do the same on the course? Oh my gosh, he was completely right. In my head, every round has been about breaking 90 (yes, I know, a bad score), but what if I instead forgot about the “goal” and instead had a bunch of small targets?

I will not bore you with all of those on my list, but just a few examples include:

1. On par 5s and 4s, forget the distance and use whatever club it takes to stay on the fairway.
2. Stop aiming for the pin on approach shots and land on the green somewhere.

Trust me, there are about 20 items on my list. Oh, yes, there is a list and I track every item on that list throughout the round. By breaking down a goal that is 18 holes away into targets that are more detailed than just scoring well on each hole, I am controlling the direction towards that goal better.

We all need to set goals for the things we want to achieve. Some can be very difficult to reach while others seem more manageable. We should also not be too rigid and understand that we can adjust our goals over time. Within our goals, though, we need successes to keep us moving forward, and that is where targets can come into play. You should be rigid, though, in how you track your progress and successes. Without that component, we will fail more than we succeed.

Coaches and trainers exist because many of us need help in that development and tracking. Feel free to reach out and ask how I coach families on this process. Lastly, I have broken 90 in my last four consecutive rounds, so I am a believer!





## *Planning is Everything*

By Will Divers,  
CTFA®, Financial Advisor

### Long-Term Discussions for Long-Term Care

It is a scary to think about long-term care. We all think it will not happen to us. We are invincible, bulletproof, nothing can happen to us. In actuality, that could not be further from the truth.

According to Morningstar, **70%** of people turning 65 will develop a long-term care need. **24%** will require more than two years of care. These are astounding numbers. If there is a 70% chance that something will happen to you, shouldn't you prepare for it. However, most people don't. In 2021 according to Morningstar, only 75,162 long term care policies were sold. That means there are a lot of people who are not prepared.

A common comment I hear is, "Well Medicare will pay for it." My response to that is, "Do you want to have a roommate?" Most people want to have a private room to spend their time with loved ones.

However, Medicare does not cover private rooms. In Athens, the average cost of a private room is \$95,527. Assisted-Living is \$50,981 and Athens Home-Care is \$50,207. These statistics are courtesy of LTC Insurance Consultants. Back to our statistics, if someone needs more than two years of care, which is 24% of people, they could be looking at hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of care.

This is not meant to scare you but it should make you look into how you are going to plan for this. In retirement planning, you should factor in what if these costs happen to you. Your Highland Trust Partners advisor can help you come up with a plan to prepare for these costs. Remember my quote from a few newsletters ago, Dwight Eisenhower said, "Plans are nothing; planning is everything." No matter your age, planning for this needs to be happening.

Sources: <https://www.morningstar.com/personal-finance/100-must-know-statistics-about-long-term-care-2023-edition>,  
<https://www.ltcinsuranceconsultants.com/long-term-care-insurance-georgia/>

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### BEACH REVIEW... *(continued from page 1)*

needed exercise. This year, I discovered that there are nice cottages for rent around the lake in the park, which come with breakfast, guided tours, and bicycles. This might be the destination for an upcoming girls' trip. There is also a lodge in the park on the beach that is a Hilton Hotel. We dined at the restaurant there, Food Craft, and it was delicious with a great atmosphere.

Orange Beach has been a wonderful destination for my family. It's a great place for fishing and boat tours. We saw the Lady in the Bay, a fiberglass sculpture of a woman sitting in the water at one

marina. We boated to the Pirates Cove Yacht Club to try our first Bushwhacker. Last year, we took a boat ride to Pensacola to watch the Blue Angels practice, which was amazing.

I hope your summer vacation plans are everything you want them to be. I find vacations more enjoyable when planned in advance, so I don't have to worry about the details or how to pay for it when the time comes. Whether you prefer the beach, the mountains, or another location, travel can be part of your financial plan. Let us help you plan for future travel memories.

# Market Index Returns\*

## Fixed Income

## Current Yield 4/25/2024

90-Day T-Bill	5.41%
5-Year T-Note	4.72%
10-Year T-Note	4.71%
30-Year T-Bond	4.82%

Source: Bloomberg

## Index

## 2024

## 2023

(1/1/2024–4/24/2024)

(One Year)

Dow Jones Ind.	2.64%	13.70%
S&P 500	6.33%	24.23%
NASDAQ	4.67%	43.42%
MSCI EAFE Growth ETF	2.89%	17.24%

Source: YCharts

\*The Dow Jones Industrial Average is comprised of 30 stocks that are major factors in their industries and widely held by individuals and institutional investors. Bond yields are subject to change. Certain call or special redemption features may exist which could impact yield. The Standard & Poor's 500 Index is a capitalization weighted index of 500 stocks designed to measure performance of the broad domestic economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries. The NASDAQ Composite Index measures all NASDAQ domestic and non-U.S. based common stocks listed on The NASDAQ Stock Market. The market value, the last sale price multiplied by total shares outstanding, is calculated throughout the trading day, and is related to the total value of the Index. The MSCI EAFE Index is a free float-adjusted market capitalization index that is designed to measure the equity market performance of developed markets, excluding the US & Canada. The MSCI EAFE Index consists of the following developed country indices: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

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