RISINGDIVIDEND

QUARTERLY QUICK FACTS

LDonaldson

Don't have time to read the investment letter from the Investment Policy Committee? Here are your five Quick Facts:

The U.S. fell into a "bear market" for the first time since 2009. Bear markets are normal; since 1928, we've had one every three to four years on average.

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The U.S. is likely already in recession, but the coordinated action from the Fed and U.S. government (CARES Act) should help mitigate the severity significantly.

Stocks have historically outperformed corporate bonds, treasury bonds, and gold by a wide margin over many decades. Going to cash or safer assets may be tempting, but history tells us that's not a good idea. Stick with your long-term plan.

We have made adjustments to the portfolio to make it more "defensive" against recession. For example, we doubled our exposure to utilities, which should hold up well as cash flows are protected by monopolistic characteristics and yields will be prized in this low interest rate environment.

The S&P 500 has seen dividend cuts in the areas most impacted (retail, travel, and airlines), however, we expect the companies you own to continue paying – even raising – dividends. Any income disruption for you would likely be small and temporary.

Faith, Hope, and Love

A CRISIS CAN MAKE US FEEL

as though everything we know is being stripped away. Yet, we know when all else is gone, faith, hope, and love remain.



SPRING 2020

FAITH. In my last note to you, I said, "Good people always find a way." Faith means to be certain of things we cannot see. Three weeks ago, we could not see where COVID-19 would take us. We could not be certain of anything. Since then, Congress, the Federal Reserve Bank, and the companies we own have all responded in massive ways to subdue the damage of this crisis.

I'm also delighted to tell you, under quite difficult circumstances, your friends at DCM have found ways to be on top of their games. Everyone at DCM not only has faith we will make it through this crisis, they have faith we will be able to perform our jobs, protecting your investments and serving you, during this crisis.

HOPE. In 1861, Emily Dickinson wrote, "Hope is the thing with feathers / That perches in the soul / And sings the tune without the words / And never stops – at all ..."

Hope can keep us going. Like you, we hope for the day this crisis ends. From a business and investment point of view, however, hope is not a strategy. It may seem like a fine line, but investing with faith trumps investing with hope. Hope says someday very soon, the Dow will get back to 29,500. Faith says, "We can do this. We may not know how today, but regardless of what comes next, we will find a way through."

LOVE. Seems a funny topic for your investment advisors to address. Even so, you should know all of us at DCM love what we do for a living. We love each other, and we



love our clients. Right now, in the middle of this crisis, we love knowing you're counting on us. We would not have it any other way.

Mike Hull

MD Halt

President and Investment Advisor

Changes From The SECURE Act That May Affect You

PRESIDENT TRUMP signed the SECURE Act into law as a part of the spending bill passed in late December 2019. The legislation is the most comprehensive retirement reform we've had in more than a decade. In case you missed our email update in January, we wanted to reiterate the two most pertinent changes for DCM clients. To read our more comprehensive summary of the SECURE Act, visit engage. dcmol.com/SECUREAct.

Stretch IRA Elimination

Before the SECURE Act, non-spousal inherited IRA owners were given the

option to "stretch" distributions based on their own life expectancy calculation. This strategy was widely adopted in order to spread out the tax liability associated with IRA withdrawals. However, for most beneficiaries, the new legislation eliminates this option. Instead, non-spousal inherited IRA owners must now distribute the entire account balance within 10 years following the year they inherited the IRA from the original account holder. The end result for IRA owners is likely a higher tax burden on those who are inheriting these assets.

Our team has begun implementing strategies for clients whose financial goals are impacted by this change (read more about this on page 7). In most cases, the priority first and foremost will be to continue to protect your nest egg and generate



the income you need from your investments. After that, your advisor is here to help you consider strategies that help ease the tax burden on your heirs, while taking into consideration your tax situation. It may be necessary to review your estate plan and evaluate your current beneficiary designations.

Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) Age

Before the SECURE Act, qualified retirement account owners were required to begin required minimum distributions from their accounts in the year they turn 70.5. The SECURE Act has changed the RMD age to the year the person turns 72. For those born on or prior to June 30, 1949, you must continue using the old rule (age 70.5). If you're born July 1, 1949, or after, you get to wait until age 72.

One small caveat to the rule is that qualified charitable distributions (QCDs) still are allowed beginning at age 70.5. This is good news for anyone who is nearing 70.5 and plans to begin using QCDs as a means of charitable giving and as a tax reduction strategy.

OUR 25-YEAR JOURNEY, A TIME TO GIVE BACK

We still plan to build a Habitat house to celebrate DCM's 25th anniversary. At this time, however, **Habitat of Evansille** has delayed the building of all houses until further notice. So, although we have yet to meet the family for whom we will be building or a tentative build schedule, we will be ready to go when the time comes. We would like to invite all clients to get involved.

How Can You Help Us Make An Impact? DONATE

DCM staff, vendors, and clients have already donated \$56,250. If you'd like to join us in this way, please visit the Habitat For

Humanity of Evansville website and select the "Donaldson Capital Management 25th Anniversary Build." Checks also can be mailed to: **Habitat for Humanity of Evansville, 560 E. Diamond Ave., Evansville, IN 47711,** memo "DCM Build."

FOLLOW US

Please "like" our **Facebook page** to stay connected. We will share updates on the selected family and progress of the build, as well as details on other events.

VOLUNTEER

If you'd like to join us by volunteering to help build the house, we would be honored



to have you. Please email us at **dcm@dcmol.com,** and we will keep you updated when the volunteer schedule gets finalized.

Mrs. Q Part II:

This Time Really Is Different

Nathan Winklepleck, Author Kyle Markle, Joe Zabratanski, Preston May, Contributing Editors

It's difficult to suffer financial losses; we want to acknowledge that COVID-19 is – above all – a human tragedy. Our hearts ache for those families who have lost loved ones, are praying for a full recovery, or awaiting test results. There are those who also face job loss and financial challenges far beyond their investment portfolios. This virus is going to touch us all; let us rally together as human beings to love and support one another in this time of great suffering.

We also want to say thank you to those of you who are doctors, nurses, first responders, and essential service workers. You continue to put yourself at the front lines and in harm's way to serve us all. We are grateful to you.

We're bringing back Mrs. Q for another portfolio review to discuss the markets in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Q: The stock market had its worst first quarter since 2008. Can you help me make sense of what's going on?

It was a month ago when our economy was running strong and financial markets were hitting all-time highs. Fast forward to today and there is an unprecedented amount of uncertainty.

Economic activity has plunged in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. A recession in the U.S. is all but certain at this point; the stock market has fallen to reflect that new reality. More than 10 million Americans filed for unemployment insurance in March. There will be millions more coming. Manufacturing, housing, and other economic data will continue to weaken for months.

The virus wasn't the only bit of bad news for the market to digest. In the first week of March, Russia refused to cut oil supply in the wake of reduced oil demand from COVID-19. The increase in supply from OPEC reignited fears of a price war like we had in 2015-16. As a result, oil prices plummeted more than 65% in the first quarter.

The economic fallout also increases the likelihood of antibusiness legislation following the November elections. When you add all three of those factors together, the swift and sharp reaction from the stock market makes sense.

Mrs. Q: The market seems to be more volatile than ever before. Why did stocks drop so fast?

The stock market's swift and fierce decline in February and March was the fastest 30% drop we've ever seen. The chart above compares the Q1 decline compared to the previous major S&P 500 declines.

Recessions are a normal part of the business cycle, but they



usually take months, even years, to materialize. In those environments, it is typical to see the stock market decline by at least 20%. That process usually takes a while; investors don't wake up in a recession overnight.

The recent deterioration in the economy was faster than we've ever seen before. A few weeks ago, the stock market was hitting all-time highs and the economy was improving. A few weeks later, the economy was at a complete standstill. That rapid and unexpected halt to economic progress caused stocks to fall so fast.

Mrs. Q: We've had numerous corrections and now had two bear markets since 2007. Is it normal for stocks to fall so much so frequently?

It is normal to have bear markets even more frequently than that. Since 1928, we've had a bear market every three to four years, on average.^[1] During those markets, stocks fell by an average of 37%. The bull market run from 2009 to 2020 was one of the longest in history. It was only a matter of time before we had another.

It's a completely normal part of investing in stocks to go through something like this. In fact, it's a necessary part. If stocks were to move higher every single year without fail, don't you think everyone would want to buy them?

Mrs. Q: Of course they would. Anything that was guaranteed to go up in price every year is something everyone would buy.

Exactly. If everyone bought stocks, prices would go up so much they would no longer produce high returns.

Since stocks are volatile, many people can't handle investing in them. That presents an opportunity for people who are willing to stomach the ups-and-downs. The volatility you endure for investing in stocks generally leads to higher rates of return.



In fact, let's take a look at a chart showing the long-term returns of stocks versus other investment assets. From 1802 to December 2006, stocks grew \$1 to an inflation-adjusted \$755,163. That blows away the returns from every other asset class including Treasury bonds (\$1 grew to \$1,083), Treasury bills (\$1 to \$301), and gold (\$1 to \$1.95); meanwhile, the value of \$1 now purchases \$0.06 worth of goods.

Stocks will drop from time to time. Even including those, they have outperformed other asset classes by a wide margin.

Mrs. Q: That's helpful, but it still doesn't make these bad markets easy to live through. How does this particular bear market compare to those in the past?

It doesn't make it easier to live through. It is part of our responsibility to help you make it through without making rash decisions.

Like other bear markets, a recession is the cause of this one. We haven't seen an official recession yet, but it is only a matter of time. The primary difference is in the cause and the speed of this recession.

Most recessions occur from internal problems within the economy. The 2008-09 recession, for example, was a housing crisis that led to a financial crisis. Credit risks and leverage were far higher than anyone realized ahead of time. When the housing market fell apart, the excess leverage threatened the financial system.

This recession is unique in that its cause is completely external. There is no historical precedent for it. The impact in the near-term is bad; we haven't seen what the long-term implications will be. We expect the long-term economic and psychological impact could be significant. This pandemic and the economic damage it causes will likely change our lives for many years to come.

Mrs. Q: I've read this event could be worse than a "normal" recession. What do you think the chances are this turns into a depression?

This is likely to be faster and deeper than most recessions. We don't expect it is going to turn into a depression. The Great Depression was a perfect storm. The Federal Reserve tightened financial conditions at the same time the economy declined. Rather than helping, as they should have done, they made things worse. That led to less business activity and made the recession even worse.

We've seen the opposite this time. The Federal Reserve's "bazooka" backstop of liquidity stabilized markets. Then, the U.S. government's massive \$2.1 trillion fiscal packages (the CARES act) passed. This suggests policymakers will do everything to support the economy. That should prevent an economic catastrophe as we saw during the Great Depression.

Still, this recession is going to be historic in its speed and depth. We have already seen record numbers of unemployment insurance claims. The data is going to continue to get worse over the next few months.

Mrs. Q: If the data is going to get worse, why don't we go ahead and go to cash right now and wait until things clear up?

Stock and bond markets are always looking into the future. That's critical to understand. Investors are always predicting what they think is going to happen. So as soon as things "clear up" the market will have already rebounded to reflect that.

Your idea to go to all cash until things clear up is a good thought. Unfortunately, the stock and bond markets will have already moved higher to reflect the improved outlook. And at that point, you will have missed out on the rebound from current levels.

Mrs. Q: OK, what if we move into other asset classes? Would those do better than stocks in this environment?

First of all, let's take a step back. Remember that stocks historically outperform bonds – and by a wide margin – over many decades. In times like this, the easiest thing to do would be to move into the short-term safety of bonds. Long-term, that's the wrong thing to do.

Still, let's talk about how other asset classes fared in the first quarter. In a "normal" recession, there are asset classes that typically go up even while stocks are going down. Through this most recent turmoil, however, very few things have worked as expected. Investors sold nearly every type of asset to raise cash.

Municipal bonds, corporate bonds, preferred stocks, and even gold were all down during the past quarter. The only asset classes that did not suffer losses were cash and U.S. Treasury bonds.

Mrs. Q: Is there anything we can do to make the portfolio a bit more protected?

There are things we have already done. Several weeks ago, we took steps to reduce exposure to some of the more hard-hit sectors. We've also added exposure to sectors that should be less exposed to economic weakness.

For example, we doubled our exposure to utilities in Cornerstone. Utility stocks are near-monopolies and tend to have bondlike characteristics in a low-yield environment. The 10-year U.S. Treasury yield is below 0.7%. We expect utilities to do well here.

We've also raised a bit of extra cash we plan to deploy once we start to see some exceptional deals. This market is going to create opportunities in several areas. We've seen high-quality dividend stocks get hit as hard (or worse) than the market. These kinds of opportunities don't come up often. That cash will be available when that time comes.

Mrs. Q: Speaking of opportunities, is this a good opportunity for me to buy more stocks?

It might be a good time to buy stocks, but not the best opportunity to buy stocks. Remember, price is not the same as value. A stock that declines in price doesn't always make it a better value. What matters is whether the current price is lower than or higher than the intrinsic value of the business. If the value of that business declines by 20%, then the price declining by 20% does not create opportunity.

The COVID-19 pandemic is going to have negative consequences in both the short-term and long-term. Earnings are going to come in far lower than they were before; that's the short-term hit. However, there could be a reduction in long-term growth as well. We are likely to see a real and lasting change in consumer behavior coming out of this.

One obvious area is going to be business travel. Not only is there a short-term disruption from months of no travel, but airlines will feel the long-term disruption for decades. Companies are realizing that a virtual meeting can be almost as effective as a face-to-face meeting. They will be more likely to schedule a virtual meeting than pay for flights and hotels.

There will be winners and losers as a result, but the impact on the economy is negative. That means the intrinsic value of most companies is less today than it was at the beginning of 2020.

Mrs. Q: What do you think the fair value of the stock market is right now?

That's difficult to say. No one knows what earnings are going to be for 2020. And no one knows whether (or how much) earnings can rebound in 2021. Valuing based on short-term earnings is difficult and not particularly meaningful. You will see the price-to-earnings (P/E) ratio quoted a lot, but that tells us nothing about value here.

During times like this, dividend payments are a better signal than earnings. Using a dividend discount model, we've estimated the fair value of the S&P 500 is between 2,700 and 2,900.

Stocks are not likely to hit all-time highs immediately after this virus clears up. Cleaning up the economic damage is going to take time. Companies don't have the same earnings and dividend growth power they had a few short months ago.

Mrs. Q: How long do you think it will take to get back to our previous highs?

There is no magic number, but we can look at history to get some clues. As shown in the chart below, we've had 11 bear markets (including the one that began in March) since 1956. Of the 11 bear markets we recovered from since then, it took an average of 25 months to reach new highs again.

But, the range was wide. The shortest recovery time was three months and the longest was almost six years. If the health impact peaks in April, the economic recovery will be quicker than average. If the pandemic extends for months, the healing process will take



longer. In that scenario, stocks may take years to get back to the all-time highs we saw in February.

In past bear markets, we didn't see stocks turn the corner until there was a solution to the underlying problem. Stocks are likely to continue to suffer until the virus peaks. The faster that happens, the quicker stocks can rebound. The longer it takes, the more likely this turns into a bigger issue.

Mrs. Q: How are dividends going to do throughout all of this?

Again, history is going to be our guide here. Going back to 1946, the average decline in dividends has been -0.5% for the S&P 500 in bear market periods. So - in most cases - dividends remain constant for the broader market.^[2]

Yet, there are some exceptions. The biggest decline was 34% during the Great Depression. We've already talked about how that situation differs from our current one. The second-largest decline was 23% during the financial crisis of 2008-09. The majority of those cuts came from the banks. And regulators mandated several of those cuts. They were not voluntary cuts forced by financial necessity.

This pandemic could be a unique scenario, particularly amongst some of the hardest-hit segments of the economy. The airline industry, cruise lines, hotel chains, and retailers have already cut dividends. Others have announced dividend "suspensions." That implies they plan to resume payments once they can re-open business.

Other than those affected sectors, we've not seen much action on the dividends. Most of the guidance from companies is that they are prioritizing dividend payments. We've even seen some companies increase dividends throughout this. That's a good sign that businesses remain confident the economic weakness is temporary.

Mrs. Q: Do you think any of my companies are going to have to cut or suspend their dividends?

If this goes on long enough, it's possible. However, we don't expect widespread dividend cuts – particularly amongst the elite businesses like the ones you own.

Remember, 2008-09 was one of the worst recessions in U.S. history. It threatened to bring the entire financial system down. Yet, through it all, many of the companies in your portfolio continued to increase their dividends. The exception was the banks, who were forced to cut dividends even if they had the earnings to support it. Even then, the reduction in your income was small.

We would expect dividend cuts could be more widespread here. However, the cuts will be among weaker companies and those caught in the bullseye of the crisis (i.e. travel and retail). We would expect most of the companies in your portfolio to continue paying – even increasing – their dividends. Any income disruption for you is likely to be small and temporary.

Mrs. Q: Thank you for your time and your attention during this difficult time.

You are most welcome, Mrs. Q. If you have anything you need, please don't hesitate to call or email me. Our entire DCM team is here for you and available to discuss anything on your mind. We're doing anything and everything we can to help navigate you to the other side of this. There will be another side.

DCM Can Help You Navigate Long-Term Care Planning

Evaluating long-term care is an important part of every estate plan, but with recent changes in the long-term care insurance industry, what is the best course of action?

A QUESTION THAT OFTEN COMES UP during financial planning reviews is how to prepare for long-term care needs. Traditionally, long-term care (LTC) insurance policies have been seen as the typical method to plan for these future healthcare expenses. However, the LTC insurance market has changed significantly over the last 20 years. According to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, while the number of people covered by a policy has more than doubled in the past decade, the number of insurers offering coverage has decreased from approximately 100 to about a dozen. On top of that, sales of new policies have recently dropped, while premium rates have seen significant increases.

As a result, LTC insurance has become largely cost prohibitive for most consumers, and that has caused a shift in the industry as people look to alternatives. One such alternative that is quickly gaining popularity is a permanent life insurance policy with a long-term care rider. This is sometimes referred to as a hybrid policy. This type of policy can be used as a death benefit or to pay for long-term care, depending on the outcome for the insured. Some policies even allow the ability to surrender and get a portion of your premium paid back.

Another option to consider is to self-insure using income from your assets to cover long-term care costs. This is, of course, dependent on whether or not you have enough liquid assets to cover the costs. Rough estimations show that a portfolio of \$3 to \$5 million would be sufficient to cover care for a couple currently in their 60s. Your advisor can help you determine a more accurate number for you.

Most experts recommend beginning to evaluate longterm care planning options in your early 50s. If you or your spouse has a history of family health issues, this is even more important. For more complex situations, we may advise seeking advice from an elder law attorney. These professionals, who also assist in general estate planning, are particularly skilled in long-term care planning strategies. If you have yet to start long-term care planning, start with your DCM advisor to review your current financial plan.

The World of Equities

HAVE YOU EVER LOOKED AT YOUR INVESTMENT ACCOUNT

statement and wondered, what's the difference between mutual funds, corporate bonds, and preferred stocks? If so, you're not alone, and it's understandable. The investment industry offers more types of investments, or asset classes, than you can count. But generally speaking, asset classes have four different categories; equities, fixed income, cash equivalents, and alternative investments.

Let's start with equities. Equities are ownership, an investment in a company by purchasing shares of that company. Or some might say, purchasing equity. Three common types of equity investments are common stocks, mutual funds, and exchange traded funds.

COMMON STOCKS

When you buy a share of common stock, you are purchasing a portion of a company. You own part of the company's assets and its liabilities. You own part of their revenues and their expenses. Therefore, you are entitled to your portion of their earnings, known as earnings per share. This ownership entitles you to elect the company's board of directors, who, in turn, will hire managers to run the business and decide on major strategies and policies. In order for a company's stock to be publicly traded, it must first "go public" through an Initial Public Offering, or IPO.

The vast majority of equity holdings in DCM's investment strategies are common stocks. More specifically, we invest in common stocks that pay a consistently growing dividend – a portion of the earnings the Board of Directors has decided to pay in cash to each shareholder.

MUTUAL FUNDS

A mutual fund is a pool of money collected from many investors to purchase a group of common stocks. These assets are managed by a professional fund manager or team of managers. The team is responsible for choosing which stocks are owned by the mutual fund. The managers follow a set of goals and guidelines spelled out in a document called the prospectus.

The original idea behind mutual funds was to give smaller investors access to own a more diversified portfolio than they might afford on their own. Today, mutual funds have evolved into pools owning a variety of asset classes (fixed income, cash, and alternative investments) and often end up in portfolios with other mutual funds, where, in DCM's opinion, investors become needlessly overly-diversified, lose track of what they own, and get stuck with unanticipated tax liabilities. Unlike your team at DCM, advisers using mutual funds can pass the blame for poor performance on to mutual fund managers.

EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS

Similar to mutual funds, exchange traded funds (ETFs) offer the smaller investor diversification by pooling funds. But instead of being managed by a money manager, ETFs are generally passively managed, tracking an index or sector of the market. ETFs are traded like stocks, whereas mutual funds can only be purchased at the end of each trading day based on a calculated price.

Your 2019 Tax Update

Extended Deadlines:

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, several tax deadlines have been extended to **July 15:**

Federal income tax filing and paying for 2019 (State deadlines are independent; please verify with your state of residence.)

Second-quarter estimated tax payment deadline

2019 IRA, Roth IRA, and HSA contributions deadline

Once 2019 returns are completed:

Having a copy of your latest tax returns can help ensure our investment strategies are supporting your financial plan. Your tax returns enhance the job we do for you in areas like:

Tax loss harvesting (the process of minimizing your capital gains tax)

Charitable giving, IRA required

minimum distribution, Roth conversion, and estate planning strategies
Asset allocation or changes to different DCM investment strategies

Once you receive your completed return, there are multiple secure ways to send it to us:

Upload through the DCM Client Portal. Once logged in, navigate to the Documents Tab and then the Cloud Storage section. There will be an Upload Files button on the top right-hand side. ■ Your Client Services Manager or Investment Advisor can send you a secure upload link via email.

A mailed hard copy. This is a more secure option than a regular email attachment.

• Your accountant may also be able to securely email us a copy with your permission.

We are always happy to work directly with your tax adviser to gather the information we need. In that case, make sure we have it and let them know they will be hearing from us.



ROTH 401(k) — Is It Right For You?

LEDCM RETIREMENT PLAN Services

AS WE COVERED ON PAGE 2, the coveted "Stretch IRA" option was eliminated in the SECURE Act and replaced by a 10-year depletion method for non-spousal traditional and Roth IRA beneficiaries. As a result, many of our wealth management clients have shown an increased concern of passing down a larger tax liability to their next generation, many of which could inherit this tax liability during their peak earning years.

Our Retirement Plan Services Team is encouraging 401(k) participants to use a Roth 401(k) option. All contributions to a traditional 401(k) are pre-tax. Employee contributions to a Roth 401(k) are made with after-tax dollars. Said another way, the difference is when the account owner is going to pay income tax

 during retirement once distributions begin or now while the person is still working.

Today, nearly 80% of 401(k) plans offer participants the Roth option.

For participants who don't expect a decrease in their tax liability in retirement or for those who are interested in maximizing assets in their estate plan, the Roth 401(k) is worth considering. With help from our partners at TD Ameritrade, we utilize a Roth versus traditional calculator whereby we can assist participants in determining what may be in their best interest to optimize their retirement plan and estate.

Our Retirement Plan Advisors are working closely with our Plan Sponsors to ensure the Roth 401(k) feature is included to provide participants with more planning capabilities. We also are evaluating options that would allow participants to convert traditional 401(k) monies to Roth 401(k) while still working.

For anyone interested in learning more about DCM's 401(k) plan services, please reach out to one of our advisors. **Phone: 833-DCM-401k · Email: RPS@dcmol.com**



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An index is a portfolio of specific securities, the performance of which is often used as a benchmark in judging the relative performance of certain asset classes. Indexes are unmanaged portfolios and investors cannot invest directly in an index. An index does not charge management fees or brokerage expenses, and no such fees or expenses were deducted from the performance shown.

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INDEX DEFINITIONS S&P 500: Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500 Index. The S&P 500 Index is an unmanaged, capitalization-weighted index designed to measure the performance of the broad U.S. economy through changes in the aggregate market value of 500 stocks representing all major industries.