



# WEALTH ADVISORS GROUP

W E A L T H   A D V I S O R   Q U A R T E R L Y

## YTD Returns Through September 30, 2020

Dow Jones Inds.	-0.8
S&P 500	+6.51
Barclays Aggregate Bond	+4.91
MSCI EAFE	-6.25
MSCI Emerging Mkts.	+0.88



## WAG on the Move

### Welcome Winnie O'Connell!

We are pleased to announce a new addition to the O'Connell family, Winifred "Winnie" Grace O'Connell. She was born on August 26th and both she and Anna are doing well. As they welcome their third child, Patrick and Anna are learning what it means to transition from man to man to zone defense. While it's all hands-on deck on the home front, they wouldn't trade it for anything (though a little more sleep would be welcome). ■



### SOLUTIONS® 2020: Schwab Virtual Conference

In August, our operations staff attended the 3-day SOLUTIONS® 2020 virtual conference event by Charles Schwab. In previous years, WAG has sent our operations staff members to attend the conference in person, but due to COVID-19 the conference was held virtually – and our staff learned just as much this year as they had in previous years!

One of the biggest take-aways from the conference was the expansion of Schwab's digital technologies and digital future. Our team was very excited about this as we are always looking for ways to be a digitally forward firm so that we can be more efficient and precise for our clients. For example, Schwab debuted a tool for clients to digitally approve wire transfers via e-Authorization. This tool lowered the cost of wire transfers for the client and is one of the most secure channels for the transfer of funds. Schwab also unveiled the expansion of the number of forms that can be sent to clients via DocuSign. Digitally signing forms via DocuSign allows for faster processing times and increases the efficiency of WAG's operation department. We are excited to continue to expand our digital capabilities and implement these new features! ■

# Tech Corner

## The “New” Wealth Advisors Group Brand and Website

To begin 2020, one of our firm goals was to create a fresh, new look to our brand. We partnered with a local firm as we embraced the journey of finding our unique voice and image in an ever-evolving wealth management industry. Since our founding in 1991, we’ve always had a strong commitment to *Investing In Life’s Moments* alongside our clients, and our ability deliver *The Integrative Advising Approach*. Below is a sneak peek of our new brand story, as well as a link to our refreshed website ([www.wealthag.com](http://www.wealthag.com)). We invite you to take a look around and as always welcome your feedback!

*They say life is made of moments. The question is, who will be there to make sure your life’s moments are everything they can be?*

By asking someone to help you plan for your financial future, you’re inviting them into your world. We’re not talking about just your bank accounts and portfolios, but really your personal world—where your priorities are set and your dreams are revealed. Important relationships like these are built on trust. Wealth Advisors Group doesn’t take that fact for granted. We don’t expect your trust—we earn it.

Every financial advisor will say they’re looking out for you. But that concern is typically very one-dimensional. They’re looking out for you in just the matters that involve them—meaning, what they’ll get paid for. At Wealth Advisors Group, we view this differently. For us, looking out for you means we’re concerned about everything that’s going on in your life, from your assets and liabilities to your children’s education and your future retirement. Just because we don’t have a stake in it doesn’t mean we don’t care about it. If it matters to you, it matters to us. And, to give us a better overall picture of your financial health, we practice Integrative Advising. With that 360° view, we’re able to help you even more. We don’t push products and we don’t rely on commissions. Our belief is if you do well, we’ll do well—so that’s how we operate. We’re dedicated to finding solutions that fit your situation in life. And, we recognize situations change. No matter what your priority is right now or what it will be tomorrow, we’ll find a way to make it happen. Your success is our bottom line.

Since life is made of moments, you want to make sure each one counts. As soon as you become part of the Wealth Advisors family, we’ll be there for your life’s moments—to help you get through them, or to celebrate them. We know eventually those moments will live on as memories that will be treasured forever. That’s why at Wealth Advisors Group, we’re investing in life’s moments. Because for you, there’s no greater return. ■

# Tax Corner

## Year-End Reminders

As the end of the year approaches, we wanted to remind you of a few items you may want to take advantage of before 2020 comes to a close.

### Charitable Giving

If you plan to give charitably, whether through Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from your IRA, gifting appreciated securities, or simply writing a check to charity, these must be taken care of before December 31st to benefit you during the 2020 tax year. Due to the CARES Act that was passed earlier this year, taxpayers who take the standard deduction in 2020 are able to take a \$300 above the line deduction for cash charitable contributions made to 501(c)(3) organizations. This is an added benefit available this year, so be sure to take advantage of it if you’re able.

### Roth Conversions

If your income in 2020 is lower than you anticipate it to be in future years, a Roth conversion may make sense for you. A Roth conversion refers to taking all or part of the balance of an existing traditional IRA and moving it into a Roth IRA. This would allow you to capitalize on the lower income tax year and let that money grow tax-free in your Roth IRA. Another benefit of this is that Roth IRAs do not have RMDs like Traditional IRAs do, so it could allow you more tax-free income in retirement.

Deciding whether to convert to a Roth IRA centers on issues like your tax rate now versus later, the tax bill you’ll have to pay to convert, and your future plans for your estate. Please reach out to your advisor if you have any questions in regards to Roth Conversions and if it may make sense for you this year.

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## Did You Know

Until the United States Federal Reserve was created in 1908, individual banks could create their own money.

## Indiana Residents – 529 Contributions and Tax Credit

As we near the end of the year, please remember that to be eligible for the Indiana 529 tax credit, all contributions must be received by December 31, 2020. We ask that you get these contributions to our office by Monday, December 21, 2020 to ensure timely processing. As a reminder, Indiana residents who contribute to the state sponsored 529 college savings plan will receive a 20% state income tax credit for every dollar contributed, up to a \$1,000 credit. For example, a \$5,000 contribution would maximize your state tax credit, assuming your Indiana tax liability is at least \$1,000 (excluding County tax liability). If you have any questions regarding this tax credit, please don't hesitate to ask. ■

# Financial Planning Corner

## Important Questions a Financial Plan Can Help You Answer

October is Financial Planning Month, and we wanted to share a few of the ways that a financial plan can be beneficial to you. Many people believe that financial planning isn't important to them, but it really could make a significant difference in your ability to enjoy every season to the fullest. A financial plan answers real questions for real people, whatever their stage of life or how much money they have. So, to pique your interest and perhaps get you thinking differently, here are seven questions a financial plan can help you answer and why each one is important—for everyone.

### 1. How realistic is it to reach all of my dreams and goals?

You may have a general idea of what you want to accomplish—buy a home, send your kids to college, take annual vacations or retire early. But the only way to make any of that happen is to get specific. A financial plan starts with helping you zero in on what you own and what you owe, and clarifies how your income can cover essentials as well as savings and discretionary expenses. It will help you focus on your goals, put a dollar amount on each and create a realistic timeline for achieving them.

### 2. What should I do first?

Trying to save, invest and pay off debt all at once can be overwhelming. A basic plan helps you

prioritize, whether you're creating a savings strategy, trying to reduce debt, or both. It can give you a blueprint for taking action; for example, getting a 401(k) match first, next paying off nondeductible high-interest debt, then contributing to your child's education. These aren't high finance issues; these are everyday issues.

### 3. How should I invest for retirement as well as shorter-term goals like a down payment or kids' education?

How you invest has a lot to do with when you need the money. The longer the timeframe, the more risk you can afford to take, depending on your own feelings about risk. Generally speaking, money you'll need within the next six-to-eighteen months, like an emergency fund or a vacation, should be in cash. Money for intermediate goals that you may need in two-to-four years, like a home down payment, might be conservatively invested in bonds. Savings for longer-term goals more than five-to-seven years out, for instance retirement or college, could reasonably be invested in stocks. Once you've answered questions one and two, you'll more easily be able to pinpoint how to invest for your various goals.

### 4. What's the best way to protect my family and myself?

A financial plan can also help you focus on crucial issues like emergency preparation and insurance. Do you have enough cash to cover at least three-to-six month's essential living expenses? When was the last time you reviewed your health insurance coverage? Do you need life or disability insurance and how much? These are the deeper questions a plan can help you answer to protect your family from the unexpected.

### 5. When will I be able to retire and how much will I need?

As you prioritize your savings goals, retirement should be high on your list, because the earlier you start planning the better. But planning for when you'll be able to retire isn't about saving blindly; it's about projecting your needs with some degree of accuracy. So back to question one. Your current expenses provide a reasonable starting point to estimate a retirement budget. This will give you an idea of how much you need to save, when you can realistically retire, and if you're on track.

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## 6. What if something should happen to me?

This is the key reason for estate planning—another concept that many people feel doesn't apply to them. But we all need to think about who will take care of our children, who will make financial and medical decisions if we can't do it for ourselves, and how we want our assets and personal property distributed. Again, it's not about "how much," but rather about "how" we want these decisions to be made. A financial plan helps keep you in charge, so someone else doesn't make decisions for you.

## 7. What am I overlooking?

There are a lot of pieces to our financial lives. And sometimes it's hard to see them all, let alone how they fit together. A financial plan lays them out for you so you can see if something is missing. If you can work with a financial planning professional, so much the better. A set of trained eyes can help you address any savings shortfalls, improve your budget, and save on taxes.

If you don't already have a financial plan, please reach out to your advisor, and he would be happy to talk further about this. ■

Article adapted from Charles Schwab Article titled: 7 Important Questions a Financial Plan Can Help You Answer

# Retirement Planning

## Medicare Open Enrollment

Medicare's Open Enrollment Period for 2020 runs from October 15th to December 7th. During this time, you can enroll in health and drug plans for 2020. Because Medicare plans change, as well as your needs, it is important to review any materials and changes in costs or coverage that may happen. This will help you decide if your current Medicare coverage will meet your needs in the upcoming year. The Medicare Plan Finder is available on Medicare's website at this link: [www.medicare.gov/plan-compare](http://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare). This is a useful tool to see what your options are for 2021, and compare coverage options. As always, please contact your advisor if you need any assistance, and he would be happy to help. ■

## Client Spotlight

### Chad Stuckey



Chad Stuckey often describes his life as revolving around good pictures. His picture includes a high school sweetheart, Betsy, who he's been married to for 27 years, three boys (Will, Jack, and Edward), serving at his Church (Woodburn Missionary), spending time at the shooting range (trying to live out his dream of being a cowboy, but limited by his allergy to horses), and of course, founding Brand Innovation Group (BIG) 25 years ago. As a national branding and marketing agency in the heart of the Midwest, Chad has effectively built and managed brands for organizations in the financial, healthcare, manufacturing and non-profit markets. While BIG has won hundreds of creative awards, their greatest joy is when their created plans propel these organizations to new heights.

As a Fort Wayne native and Purdue graduate, Chad sees opportunity here in the Midwest for "big thinking" for organizations that are overlooked by national agencies. In fact, Chad says, "our clients love the mid-western work ethic as much or more than the creative solutions. They want to feel their agency is on their team. They want to know they can count on us." BIG's mission: Love God. Love People. Love Branding. As Chad describes it, "It's not just a mission statement, it's a to-do list. It reminds us what our priorities should be."

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Their approach is simple: Discover, Develop, Deliver. They start with multi-layered research to discover their clients' true brand story. From there, they develop an integrated, strategic plan that covers everything from positioning to promotion. Finally, they deliver tactics to propel their clients' brand to the top of their respective market.

It's safe to say that mission and approach has resonated with non-profits and organizations in many different sectors of the market. BIG has clients in 13 different states, many of whom are leaders in their industry. They have worked with brands such as: Fleetwood, Aunt Millies, Best Chairs, Goshen Hospital, The Lutheran Foundation, Matthew 25, The Rescue Mission, Compassion International, The Navigators, and most recently, Wealth Advisors Group.

Over the past few months, BIG has helped us identify and better articulate our "why" and "how" we work with our clients as well as providing us with an integrated and coordinated digital marketing plan. As a client of WAG himself, Chad has firsthand experience with the help we provide with key decisions and planning as he comes across life's significant moments. He says, "They help me live toward my personal goals. I trust them and they are great friends and partners". If you haven't already checked it out, please visit our updated website to see our new brand messaging at [www.wealthag.com](http://www.wealthag.com).

While Chad may not have achieved his dream of being a cowboy (yet), it's safe to say that he's created a great picture for himself, his family, his employees, and the many organizations he's partnered with. We are excited to see what's next. ■

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There is no guarantee that a diversified portfolio will enhance overall returns or outperform a non-diversified portfolio. Diversification does not protect against market risk. No strategy assures success or protects against loss.