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STOP IN AT ANY OF OUR LOCATIONS



Lynn or Teresa in Alma 608-685-4461
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MARKET VOLATILITY
Tim Wuebben & Brian Harris, SagePoint Financial, Inc.

Even as the markets have shifted with world events, rest assured that that we can help you navigate these times of uncertainty. Knowledge is power, so we’re committed to equipping you with the tools and information you need to weather this storm.

Understanding what “volatility” means in the financial markets is crucial to successfully withstanding periods of instability. While the specific causes are complex, uncertainty lies at the root of nearly all volatility. Volatility is inevitable, so we employ strategies to avoid long term negative impact on your portfolio.

Gauge your risk tolerance. Depending on your age, comfort, and objectives, your portfolio may reflect a conservative, moderate, or aggressive strategy. Appropriate asset allocation can diversify your portfolio and deliver a broader safety net during phases of financial adjustment. Keep in mind, market variability doesn’t automatically equal bad news; it can equal opportunity. Though it may be natural to focus on declines caused by instability, remember that market fluidity offers pathways to future growth.

Enduring ambiguity and economic changes without reacting emotionally can be challenging. Market cycles are normal and should be expected, and markets themselves have proven resilient over time. It’s important to maintain discipline and focus on your goals.

If you’re feeling concerned about the market, let’s connect. We are always happy to revisit your goals, review your risk tolerance and ensure you’re on track. In the meantime, we remain available and will be keeping our eye on things. The stock market isn’t known for its emotional stability. When the markets react emotionally, it’s imperative to think rationally. Although no one can predict the future, panicked selling during a downturn is often the worst thing you can do. Prevention is the best medicine for our health – washing our hands, not touching our face in public, getting enough rest, eating healthy and avoiding contact with sick individuals. Similarly, planning for volatility before you experience it is essential for your financial wellbeing.

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risks, and investment decisions should be based on your own goals, time horizon, and risk tolerance. The return and principal value of investments will fluctuate as market conditions change. When sold, investments may be worth more or less than their original cost. The S&P 500 Composite Index is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. Index performance is not indicative of the past performance of a particular investment. Past performance does not guarantee future results. Individuals cannot invest directly in an index.

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TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

In Wisconsin, only 40% of individuals can correctly answer more than three out of five questions on a basic financial literacy quiz.* How do you compare?

- 1. When interest rates decrease, will the value of bonds increase, decrease, or stay the same?
- 2. *True or False?* A 15-year mortgage typically requires higher monthly payments than a 30-year mortgage, but the total interest paid over the life of the loan will be less.
- 3. If you have \$200 in a savings account that earns 10% interest per year, how much will you have in the account at the end of two years? \$_____.
- 4. *True or False?* Buying a single company’s stock usually provides a safer return than a mutual fund.
- 5. The rate of increase in the price of goods and services over time is called _____.

**See: The National Financial Capability Study (NFCS), a project of the FINRA Investor Education Foundation (FINRA Foundation), 2018.*



BANK OF ALMA

If you have any questions or comments about the Bank of Alma’s MONEY MATTERS or suggestions for future articles, we’d enjoy hearing from you. All articles may be edited for content and clarity.

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QUIZ ANSWERS:
1. increase; 2. true; 3. \$242; 4. false; 5. inflation.



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APRIL 2022



GREAT RIVER ORGANIC MILLING
is on the rise in Fountain City

Just north of Fountain City, WI, along Wisconsin’s Great River Road (State Hwy 35), Great River Organic Milling has completed their new packaging facility and executive headquarters. They are in the first weeks of operations, and President Rick Halverson is hard at work on the production line and out in the facility. He took some time recently to speak with Money Matters about the history and future of his business.

Great River Organic Milling provides organic and non-GMO flour, grains, beans, lentils, rice, hot cereals and pancake mixes, which are available through on-line, retail, and commercially across the country. Their commitment to quality sources and numerous certifications has made them an appealing supplier of custom milling for bakeries, cereal companies, and private labels.

The original mill began in 1975 as Little Bear Trading Company in Waumandee, WI producing stone-ground organic products long before they were trendy. Though the name changed around 1990, Great River Organic Milling continues the tradition of using granite millstones and high-quality grains, most of which are grown right here in the Midwest.

Rick first came to Buffalo County, Wisconsin in 1993 from White Bear Lake, Minnesota. He worked in sales for La Crosse Milling Company in Cochrane. Three years later he met his wife Michelle, who is originally from Elmhurst, Illinois. In September 1997, Rick and Michelle married, with each having a child from a previous marriage: Rick a son and Michelle a daughter. Coincidentally they were the same age. The kids have grown, married, and expanded the family with two grandsons and one on the way.

When Rick purchased Great River Organic Milling in 2004, the business had been struggling after several changes in leadership. Rick bought it on the condition that two of the owners would stay on to run the mill and the books, and he himself could oversee the

sales and marketing given his background. In the 18 years since, Rick has transformed a small, dilapidated facility into a robust and successful operation.

Around 2007, Rick began improving the mill, replacing old silos for new ones and fixing up the nineteenth-century farmhouse. In 2009, he added a warehouse for packaging and fulfillment. The expansion allowed Great River to keep all production in-house while the business continued to grow. The mill can operate 24/7 and employs more than 20 full-time employees.

Rick’s latest project is located in the township of Milton near Fountain City. This facility includes a 32,000 square foot packaging facility as well as executive offices. Great River Milling expects to grow their workforce in the future, meeting all new opportunities with agility.

These days, Great River Organic Milling is flourishing, especially after the pandemic home-baking craze. In addition to their own branded offerings, they produce millions of pounds of pantry items a year for Whole Foods 365™ and other private labels sold across the United States. Great River Organic Milling sources most of their grains from the Midwest. Some of the other crops like beans, lentils, and rice come from Argentina and India. Their most popular flour is their Organic All-Purpose White Flour sold regionally in Costco stores. Locally, you can find their products at Bluff Country Co-Op in Winona, MN, and Festival Foods and Woodman’s in Onalaska, WI. Online, you can buy Great River Organic Milling products from Amazon, E-bay, and in bulk from their own website.

Explore Great River Organic Milling’s products and recipes at www.greatrivermilling.com or call 608-687-9580 for more information. Office hours are 8-4:30, M-F.

Follow them on social media for recipes and more:



@greatrivermilling
@greatriverorganicmilling



Set S.M.A.R.T. Money Goals

SMART money goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely:

- Specific:** Decide what you *will* do rather than worry about what you *should* do.
- Measurable:** Put a real number on it, whether dollar amount, percentage, limit, or quota.
- Attainable:** Start small and be realistic about what you can actually accomplish.
- Relevant:** Know the “why.” How does this goal fit into your life and personal values?
- Timely:** Give yourself a deadline or schedule for achieving your goal.



To stay accountable, write your goals down and discuss them with your family and friends.


Example: Anna kept worrying about how she ought to get out of debt, but never made any progress. Her sister told her to take action. Anna sat down and made a SMART goal: each month she would pay \$200 towards her excess credit card debt for the next six months. She wrote down her plan, posted it on the fridge and told her sister about her new commitment.



SAVINGS: Fund Your Future Self

Saving money can be difficult! However, if you start small and make a plan, you can create peace of mind with the right strategy. In addition to setting SMART goals for your savings, consider the following:

-  **Be Prepared:** Before you start saving for a rainy day, make sure you are prepared for the unexpected with an Emergency Fund. It’s easier to save for vacation when you know you would be able to pay for surprise car repairs.
-  **Automate it:** Establish an automatic transfer into your savings or retirement account. Don’t let decision fatigue get in the way of your money goals. Call us today to set one up.

-  **Talk with us:** Bank of Alma has a range options for your savings goals, whatever they may be. Talk with a personal banker today to see what is best for your situation:
 - Christmas Club
 - Passbook Savings
 - Junior Savers
 - Certificate of Deposit
 - Money Market Deposit Account
 - Traditional or Roth IRA (Individual Retirement Account)



TIPS & TIDBITS: Fraud Alerts

- We run into internet and telephone fraud schemes quite frequently. Favorites are, “I’m representing the IRS, and you will go to jail if you don’t send money now,” and the same approach using the Social Security Administration.
- “Romance” scams are also common, often over social media. One party uses emotional manipulation and various excuses to request money, but they are not the person they purport to be.
- If anyone offers to send you money in exchange for a partial return of funds, don’t fall for it. Their check will bounce and you will be hung with the bill.

Donating to Ukraine? Slow down. Do your homework, so your generosity benefits a cause rather than a criminal. Some scam charities have names that are similar to legitimate organizations. Visit the charity’s website for specifics on their mission and how your money will be spent. You can find ratings of many charities on Give.org (Better Business Bureau), Charity Navigator, Charity Watch, or Guidestar.

If you think you are being scammed, please call a bank representative before any money changes hands. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to get your money returned, particularly if you used a gift card or wire transfer to send your money.

Fixed Rate Home Loans AVAILABLE NOW



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From the Desk of BILL BOSSHARD *Strength of a Bank is in Its Capital*

Statistics recently distributed by the Wisconsin Bankers Foundation listed Bank of Alma as the community bank with the highest Tier 1 leverage capital ratio in the state of Wisconsin. Capital in a bank equates to the amount of funds left in the bank by the stockholders. With a 46% capital ratio, the Bank of Alma exceeds the minimum capital required by greater than five times. While it is true that deposits are insured to \$250,000, it is good to know that your bank has the backup necessary to survive these turbulent times.

Source: Wisconsin Bankers Foundation, Banconomics WI Asset Quality Report Q4 2021.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

ALMA

Come see the Easter Bunny at the ninth annual Spring Fling hosted by the Alma Booster Club for the benefit of Alma Area Schools. April 9, 2022 from 9am-2pm. Featuring a bake sale, craft vendors, and brunch food. Alma Chamber, 110 N Main St, Alma, Wisconsin. For more info, contact Alex Sedlmayer at alexm.sedlmayr@gmail.com or 714-307-1894.

Established in November 2021, Joe and Liz Walker’s Silvermoon has already been a popular spot for fundraisers, dances, and bingo, not to mention the tasty food and cold drinks. Camping is available April through October, too. Call 608-685-9797 or email walkersilvermoon2021@gmail.com.

12 Mile Bluff Inn is Alma’s newest accommodation, located above the former Mississippi River Pearls shop and managed by Blue Door Properties. Contact Kathy Goodman at lodging@bluedoorinnalma.com for more information.

NELSON

Have you seen the beautiful barn going up on County Road D? It’s the future site of Township 23 Distillery. They plan to open in summer/fall of 2022. They will feature vodka at first. Then, the plan is to distill whiskey and bourbon, but the aging process does take some time. Patience will pay off! Located at W2363 Cty. Rd. D.

Nelson’s Landing RV Park has added 11 more sites to their campground and will possibly add more in the future. Contact William or Cecilia at the Cheese Factory or email nelsonslandingrvpark@gmail.com for more info.

Beth’s Twin Bluffs Café is back! They’re cooking up delicious food seven days a week. Walk-ins, reservations, take-out and dine-in are all available. Call 715-673-4040.

Todd C Kunkel Enterprises, based in Durand, has given the Nelson Handymart a facelift with all new gasoline pumps and a new awning.



PEPIN

The Harbor View Café (est. 1980) starts a new chapter in its story. Last September, ownership of the Harbor View Cafe transitioned from Ruth Stoyke after 32 years at the cafe (16 as an employee and 16 as owner with her partners Steve and Deb Berghs) to the Murray siblings: Missy, Wendy and Chris. They are continuing the tradition of locally-sourced food made from scratch and served with care. Wishing this regional gem a good season with many more to come.

Kyzmet Koffee in Pepin, Wisconsin thanks the community for the warm welcome! They opened in November 2021 at 415 3rd Street, at the corner of Lake Street. Kyzmet specializes in custom coffee and espresso drinks, and also serves breakfast sandwiches, pizza, soups, and daily specials. Spring will bring mimosas, Guinness chocolate shakes and other surprises. Kyzmet offers online ordering, event catering, and meeting space for small groups. Stop by to meet owner Denay, manager Rachel, and the talented baristas and cooks. Stay tuned for live music and art classes.

The Village of Pepin has launched a new Tourism Commission, including Sue Fedie as Chairperson, Denise Parker as Vice Chair, and Bank of Alma’s own Heidi Baader as Secretary. Pat Sandstrom, Anne Murray, and Mel Scheoder will also serve on the Commission, which aims to balance the development of tourism with respect for the residents and environment of the Pepin community.

WABASHA

The City of Wabasha along with the Wabasha VFW and Legion Clubs are working on the future Veterans Park to be located at the corner of Pembroke and Hiawatha. What a wonderful tribute to our brave veterans.

Congratulations to Jim Wobbe with the new addition to Interstate Disposal. May you continue to expand successfully.

Rumor has it the National Eagle Center’s Phase 1 renovations are progressing beautifully. We’ll be anxiously awaiting the reopening this spring. Bill Mercer has been named Curator of Collections. He comes to the Eagle Center with over 30 years of museum experience and will enhance the world class collection of more than 25,000 single eagle objects compiled by Preston Cook. He will also work to bring attention to the spiritual connections to eagles as they work with the Prairie Island Indian Community.

EMPLOYEE NEWS

Alicia Fliflet has joined the staff at the **Pepin** branch as a **Personal Banker**. Alicia and her husband Joe have moved back to Stockholm, WI. Her dream is to have a small hobby farm in the future. They currently have eight chickens and nine cats, and recently got a St. Bernard puppy. Aside from hanging with her animals, Alicia loves spending time with her family and friends. She says that everyone she’s worked with has been very welcoming and friendly. She is excited to be able to reconnect with familiar faces and get to know the customers.
Welcome, Alicia!