



**“NAVIGATING A
WORLD IN
TRANSITION” BY
JANICE HENDERSON**

make someone's day.



**“KINDNESS IN ALL ITS
FORMS”**



**TAX SEASON MAILING
INFORMATION & HOW
TO SPOT COMMON
TAX SCAMS**



**WHAT'S NEW AT LAW &
ASSOCIATES, INC.?**

LAW & ASSOCIATES, INC.

“Navigating a World in Transition”

By: Janice L. Henderson, CFP®

We enter 2017 facing a world in transition. The result of the U.S. presidential election and the earlier Brexit vote in the U.K., in part, reflect potential populist sentiment that appears to be challenging the decades-long march of globalization. The uncertainty brought on by this political shift, paired with muted economic growth across much of the world, leaves many economies vulnerable to shocks. What's more, recognizing that aggressive central bank stimulus may have reached its limits should have investors considering the potential consequences of years of such policies.

Having said that, the global economy continues along its low-growth path. However, there are a number of bright spots. In the U.S., despite the political uncertainty, a strengthening consumer is driving stronger growth. A large fiscal stimulus under the new administration could well provide another boost to the U.S. economy. Valuations in many areas of the U.S. market appear stretched, but with a pickup in earnings, the market may not remain so expensive. Europe remains highly challenged, with uncertainty about the future of the European Union, low growth and high unemployment. Yet many companies are rising above these regional woes and valuations appear relatively compelling. China's economy continues to grow, supported by aggressive stimulus and a healthier real estate market. And, in many emerging markets, the rebound that began in 2016 appears to have momentum, supported by higher commodities prices and China's turnaround.

Uncertainty over the direction of the Trump administration may linger for months. But, questions about the future of trade policy may be partially offset by prospects for lower corporate taxes and other business-friendly policies. With the election behind us, the U.S. expansion, well into its seventh year, continues to show age is just a number. With no obvious signs of excesses in the economy, look for continued

growth in 2017, driven by a strengthening consumer. The U.S. remains a tale of two economies – with consumer health partly offset by relatively weak, although recovering, industrial activity. We believe it is reasonable to think about modest growth moving forward.

If we have not seen you in a while, we recommend that you contact us. We continue to believe that your personal financial planning is a very important component to the process and helps to guide us in our recommendations. It keeps us abreast about changes in your lives that will potentially impact “your plan.”

The information contained in this report does not purport to be a complete description of the securities, markets, or developments referred to in this material. The information has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable, but we do not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete. Any opinions are those of Janice Henderson and not necessarily those of Raymond James. Expressions of opinion are as of this date and are subject to change without notice. There is no guarantee that these statements, opinions or forecasts provided herein will prove to be correct. Investing involves risk and you may incur a profit or loss regardless of strategy selected.

Kindness in all its forms:

In the words of American writer Henry James: “Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind; and the third is to be kind.”

February 14-20 is Random Acts of Kindness Week, a perfect time for all of us to do something good for somebody, and quite possibly inspire others to do the same. The week was created by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, a nonprofit, privately funded organization founded in 1995 and devoted to encouraging individuals, groups and communities to perform anonymous or not-so-anonymous acts of kindness all week long.

And it's so easy to be part of the celebration. Help someone with some yard work. Hold the door open for a stranger. Pick up litter by the side of the road. Pay the tab for the person behind you at the coffee shop. Give up your place in line for someone who seems hurried. Write a letter of thanks to a soldier serving overseas. Offer to buy some clothes or food for someone in need. Write a letter to a person who made a difference in your life. Drop in on a shut-in or elderly neighbor and just visit with them. Cover the rest of the bill for the person in front of you who came up just short. Or just smile at someone. For more ideas, visit randomactsofkindness.org.

When it comes to kindness, small acts can have large repercussions.

**Be a part of Random
Acts of Kindness Week
February 14-20!**

Mailing Schedule for Tax Season 2017:

- ▶ 1099R for retirement accounts will be mailed by January 31
- ▶ 1099Q for Education Savings accounts will be mailed by January 31
- ▶ 1099 for retail accounts have two mailing dates. The first mailing will go out February 15 and the second will be February 28.
- ▶ Any remaining/amended 1099s will be mailed no later than March 15.
- ▶ If you have an account that will have K-1s they are mailed from the Limited Partnerships directly to you at various times. If you have additional questions regarding these please call us.

Tax Prep Software:

If you're filing your own taxes, Raymond James has partnerships with the following that allow you to electronically import the information from your 1099s:

- ▶ TaxACT
- ▶ TurboTax
- ▶ H&R Block

Protecting yourself from tax scams:

Protecting your financial information is always a top priority for us. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recently reminded us that tax-related scams, even after tax season, are still pervasive. Two particular scams are on our radar — fake IRS phone calls and email phishing — and we want to be sure they're on yours, too.

These unsolicited calls, automated messages or emails supposedly from the IRS, could be notifying you of a bogus tax bill or refund, or an email may even link to a website that looks real, but likely is not. The IRS offers these tips to help you identify potential fraudsters:

- The IRS will always mail a bill first, not call you for immediate payment. You can question and confirm the bill with someone before paying it.
- The IRS will not ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone, and will not demand that you pay a certain way (i.e., with prepaid debit card).
- The IRS will not threaten to call the police or file a lawsuit against you.
- If you receive an unsolicited email, do not click on the provided link, as it could contain a virus. (You can forward the email to phishing@irs.gov, then delete it.)

I believe you can never be too careful when it comes to protecting your information privacy. Here are a few more suggestions for thinking ahead of potential scams:

- Never share any personal or financial information when contacted unexpectedly.
- Question all unsolicited emails, before opening any contained links. Try hovering your mouse over a link to ensure it's encrypted (often denoted with an https://).
- Phony emails may be characterized by poor grammar and a lack of formatting.
- Are you being told not to contact your lawyer, accountant or another third party? It's probably a scam.
- If you're being promised something outlandish, it probably *is* too good to be true.

The false alerts and bogus claims are intended to take advantage of our desire to fix a problem as quickly as possible. If you're prompted for information — for whatever reason — take a moment before you react. According to the IRS, you should always be afforded time to confirm a claim directly with someone before handing over sensitive information.

If you do receive a questionable communication, investigate further by doing an internet search for legitimate contact information before divulging anything. Should you have further questions, please feel free to contact us.

What's new at Law & Associates, Inc.?

Sally and Janice will both be attending the Raymond James Winter Symposium in St. Petersburg, FL this February. **Sally** recently attended a board meeting for the Women's Leadership Alliance. Sally is a proud board member of this organization and both *Sally and Janice are founding members.*

Alyson and her husband Matt will be welcoming their first child, a little girl, this May!

Judith's son, James, has been selected to the "Capstone Men and Women" at The University of Alabama. The elite group of 35 students act as Ambassadors; host tours of the campus, assist the President's office and Admissions, and take part in hosting campus events.