



Jacksonville Police and Fire Pension News

"We Serve...and We Protect"

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - ADMINISTRATOR

THE SWEARING IN CEREMONIES AND INAUGURATION have been held. *NOW* it is the time for the new Congress to begin work on the many important issues facing our Country. The new Administration will offer numerous proposals to deal with the multitude of economic problems. Working together, Congress, the Administration, and involved stakeholders will find solutions to the many fiscal problems facing our Country. The first test is the Economic Stimulus Plan. We will report to you the outcome.



CHANGE, RIGHT AWAY PLEASE. Institutional and individual investors alike were hoping for significant market changes with the new Administration. In what turned out to be the worst Inauguration Day performance ever for the Dow, major U.S. stock indexes plunged after disappointing reports from the banking sector. The Dow slid 4.01%, while the S&P 500 shed 44.90 points, the NASDAQ dropped 88.47 points, the Russell 2000 plunged 32.80 points, and the Dow Jones Wilshire 5000's 469.92 point loss.

LEFT OVER issues include repealing the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision in the Social Security System. These punitive provisions cost many of our Members up to two thirds of their monthly Social Security benefit. These Social Security benefits were paid for by our Members via their contributions while working in Social Security covered positions. We are meeting with Senator Bill Nelson on February 2nd to discuss this subject.

UNLESS YOU HAVE BEEN AWAY, far away, you are aware of the increased fiscal pressure on all Public Pension Funds due to the worldwide economic situation. All major economic measurement benchmarks were down for our fiscal year ending September 30th.

DURING the last three months of 2008, markets suffered another historic sell-off, making the third and fourth quarters the two worst back-to-back declines in 75 years. In the fourth quarter of 2008, many of our equity portfolios performed better than their benchmarks, in some cases by significant margins. Most portfolios outperformed for the full year as well, though those in the smaller capitalization ranges were down modestly more than their benchmarks.

SINCE MID 2007, with the onset of the housing financing issues, we have witnessed the most serious decline in the stability of the American Investment Market. One of our top Investment Advisors described 2008 this way, *"This year saw our investment process face greater challenges than ever. At times, it seemed like the rules had been suspended"*.

WHAT HOLDS US TOGETHER during these difficult days is the combination of experience the Board and Staff share from previous market cycles; the professionalism we continue to display when dealing with our Elected Officials, Plan Professionals, Members, and Beneficiaries; and the discipline to adhere to the implementation of the Asset Allocation and Investment Policy Plan adopted by the Board. We "press on" with the knowledge gained from many past "crises" that such periods of extreme irrationality are temporary and will pass with time and our investments will recover their value. Given time, the Market will return to normal operations.

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The Florida Legislature requires you to be informed of our policy regarding the use of **your** Social Security number. *The highlights of our Policy are as follows:*

We collected **your** Social Security number when you joined the Pension Fund to provide the unique numerical identification we utilize to record **your** contributions to the Fund during **your** career, and track the distributions to **you** in your retirement years.

Your Social Security number is utilized internally by the Fund staff for data collection and reconciliation, accrual of service, tracking continuous service, data adjustments and benefit calculations while working, and processing **your** benefit identification verification during retirement. We utilize the Social Security number of our beneficiaries for processing benefit payments.

The Pension Board long ago suppressed the use of **your** Social Security number on documents we send in the mail to our retirees and beneficiaries. These documents include Direct Deposit Statements, Pension Vouchers, and Annual Affidavits.

Due to Federal Tax Law requirements, we must include your Social Security number on the Annual Tax Statement we send each January to all retirees and beneficiaries.



February 16th is
PRESIDENTS DAY

**THE POLICE AND FIRE PENSION
FUND OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED
FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY**

**CONGRATULATIONS
TO OUR NEW POLICE
RECRUITS**

FARRELL, Steve J.
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Guard your long-term care coverage

Many long-term care policies have increased premiums for 2009, sometimes making them difficult to afford. Quitting the policy would not be a good choice for people who have had it for a number of years, or who have developed a condition that would make them uninsurable by another company or make their policy price even higher.

If you don't want to pay the higher premium, a better choice would be to reduce coverage in an amount that offsets the premium increase. Choices include reducing the daily benefit, shortening the benefit period, or lengthening the waiting time before benefits kick in.



Savings: short-term thinking

Researchers say you'll save more over the long term if you plan your savings one month at a time.

You will have saving in focus, say professors at Houston's Rice University and at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. Their study showed that people who plan their savings four months in advance are overly optimistic and end up saving less than those who plan for one month. For example, one-month planners said they would save \$287 during the next month. They actually saved more. Four month planners aimed for \$946 but actually saved \$492 a month.



Considering the halfway rule

Wall Street strategists say that, historically, investors start discounting a slow economy about halfway through a recession. That makes stocks rise in value as the economy picks up steam.

To use the rule for profitable buys, you have to determine when a recession started and calculate when it's going to end. Many believe a recession began in December 2007 or January of 2008.

In the 16 periods of economic contraction in the U.S. since 1919, the average length has been 13 months, according to the National Bureau of Economic Research. That would put the economy beyond the halfway point now, but this recession could last six months longer.

Housing bill raises reverse mortgage limits

The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 made changes to reverse mortgages effective October 1, 2008. They include higher borrowing limits and protections from aggressive marketing.

A homeowner who is at least 62 years old can use a reverse mortgage to access home equity. It doesn't have to be repaid until the owner moves permanently, sells or dies.

The act raises the maximum amount for a reverse mortgage to \$417,000 (or \$625,500 in areas of high housing costs) from the previous limits of \$200,160 and \$362,790.

The amount that can be borrowed depends on the value of the home, its location, current interest rates, and the borrower's age.

Loan origination fees may not exceed two percent of the initial \$200,000 and one percent of the remaining balance up to a maximum fee of \$6,000.

The loan originator's duties include all arrangements related to the loan until the loan is granted.

Lenders are prevented from requiring borrowers to purchase insurance, annuities, and other products as a condition for obtaining the mortgage, or allowing others to attempt to sell financial products as part of the closing process.

Asleep at the wheel?

You might not realize you are drowsy

You say you don't drive for long hours at a time and you're rarely behind the wheel in the middle of the night. So falling asleep at the wheel can't happen to you.

Wrong. If you think about it, you'll have to admit there have been times when you were drowsy while driving your car or truck. Though you didn't realize it at the time, your brain was shutting down. You were becoming as impaired as if you were drunk, say doctors at the University of Minnesota.

There are two sleepy periods in each 24 hours. The first is between midnight and 6 a.m. The second is from early to mid-afternoon. You might blame what you had for lunch for the sleepiness, but your biological clock is responsible.

Quoted in *Readers Digest*, doctors at Washington State University's Sleep and Performance Research Cen-



ter say these signs indicate that you are too tired to drive.

*Continually yawning.

*You are irritable and uncomfortable. Your mind wanders and you have disconnected thoughts.

*You can't remember driving the last few miles. Your driving becomes sloppy and you may hit rumble strips on the side of the road. Opening the windows, turning up the radio or stopping to stretch won't keep you awake.

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety recommends stopping for a caffeinated drink if you feel sleepy. Then, nap for 20 minutes while you wait for the caffeine to take effect.

To decrease your risk of drowsy driving, don't skimp on sleep. Find other ways to save time.

Sleepy drivers are responsible for 22 percent to 24 percent of all crashes.

Dentists using fewer antibiotics

In the past, newspapers have carried stories about healthy people developing sometimes fatal infective endocarditis (IE), an infection in the heart, after dental work. Dentists have given many patients antibiotics in the hope of preventing the infection.

That policy is changing. The American Heart Association (AHA) says even people who already have heart disease don't need this precaution. Their study of all cases of IE from 1950 through 2006 shows that only patients at high risk for serious complications from IE should take preventive antibiotics, a decision that will result in a 90 percent reduction in antibiotic use by dentists.



Doctors at John Hopkins Medical Centers say those who should take preventive antibiotics are people who have had IE, artificial heart valve replacement, valve problems after a heart attack, or congenital heart defects. Penicillin or an alternative is usually given.

A recent study published in *Heart* shows the risks of antibiotic use outweigh the benefits because people are more likely to have an allergic reaction to the antibiotic than to develop IE.

Most patients can control bacteria by brushing and flossing.

Here's news about your heart and vitamin D

You may already be watching your vitamin D intake because it's needed to help your body absorb calcium. The D and calcium together protect your bones.

Now, many studies point to the fact that lack of this sun-derived nutrient is tied to increased heart disease risk.

Reporting in *Business Week*, Dr. James O'Keefe says low vitamin D levels are associated with major heart-risk factors such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and stiffening of the left ventricle of the heart and its blood vessels.

A low vitamin D level is also associated with increased inflammation, a big heart risk.

According to O'Keefe, about half of all adults and 30 percent of children are vitamin D deficient. There are several ways to get more.

Just ten minutes of sun exposure between the hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. each day is enough for light skinned people to reach the recommended level. People with darker skin need somewhat longer exposure.

If you will have more than 15 to 30 minutes of sun exposure, be sure to wear sun block.

Salmon and deepwater fish are rich in vitamin D. Milk is fortified, but you would need to drink 10 to 20 glasses of milk to get enough D, says O'Keefe

Dr. Robert Simpson, professor of pharmacology at the University of Michigan, whose group was the first to identify vitamin D receptors in heart cells, says vitamin D isn't just another vitamin. It is a precursor to a hormone, that is a cardiovascular regulator.

He recommends supplementation because you probably won't get enough vitamin D from food.

Home security systems can be wireless

Protect yourself and valuables

If thousands of dollar signs fill your head when you think of a home security system, here's good news: New wireless systems are effective and can cost as little as \$200.

The systems cannot only help authorities catch a burglar (and keep your family safe), they can warn one not to enter in the first place. Professional burglars say they stay away from homes that are protected by a system and move on to easier prey.

A Web search will turn up several wireless systems. The GE Security's Simon XT is one of them. It costs about \$200, more for the deluxe version, plus \$30 a month for monitoring.

The system can track activity in 40 zones of the house, such as windows or doors equipped with sensors. Like many systems, the sensors can be programmed to

alert a homeowner by cellphone when one is triggered.

If you connect a digital video camera to the Simon XT, it can send images to you from the sensors. You could see who is by the front door or who is opening your liquor cabinet.

Any system should include sensors for all perimeter doors, doors leading to a garage or store room, and several motion detectors.

The system should also include outside and inside alarms to scare off intruders. And it should have a silent alarm code in case someone forces the homeowners to shut down the alarm.

If a monitored system is not for you, consider Armor Concepts Door Jamb Armor. It reinforces all parts of the door that can break so it can't be kicked down. A full set costs about \$125.

Aspirin and bone health

If you have been wondering whether taking a baby aspirin every day is good for your heart, it probably is. Here's another plus to taking one.

According to *PloS One*, a journal from the Public Library of Science, many doctors have noticed that people on regular aspirin therapy tend to have stronger bones.

More than one study supports this observation. In one study of mice, aspirin helped to rebuild bones in two ways. It promoted the growth of new bone cells and it prevented existing bone from being broken down and reabsorbed by the body. Scientists hope the findings will result in a new osteoporosis therapy.

The size of one serving

The American Cancer Society says:

- 1 ounce meat is the size of a matchbox (eat 3 to 4 ounces)
- 3 ounces fish: size of a checkbook
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter: the size of a ping-pong ball
- 1 ounce cheese: the size of four dice
- 1/2 cup pasta: size of a tennis ball
- 1 apple or orange: size of a tennis ball
- 1 cup vegetables or fruit: size of a baseball
- 1 medium potato: size of a computer mouse
- 1/4 cup dried fruit: a small handful

Your heart is asking.....

What have you done for me lately?

The heart goes about its work without saying much. Though it might have a lot to complain about, it might not give you a clue until it quits.

Don't wait. If you haven't done anything for your heart lately, this is a good time to start.

There are many things you can do without investing a lot of time or money. Consider these heart-pleasing steps:

***Check your number**, your blood pressure reading, that is. If it's too high, it can kill your heart over time. If it's borderline, you can reduce it a few points by eating more fruits and vegetables, especially those with potassium or magnesium. Try bananas, baked potatoes, and spinach. Blood pressure will decline if you relax for a half hour each day and get enough sleep.

***Get more fit.** Aerobic fitness is a key predictor of longevity, say physiologists at the University of Virginia. Even if you don't lose weight and do have other heart-risk factors, just taking a 25-minute walk three



times a week increases fitness and helps your heart.

If you're a TV addict, do something during commercials like walking in place, getting up and down from the chair, or doing push-ups. It adds up.

* **Lower your LDL**, the bad

cholesterol. You'll do your heart a favor. With a high LDL level, it can be deposited as plaque in arteries, including those in the heart.

***Quit smoking.** Everybody knows that it's bad for the heart.

***Lose weight** when you should. It will help keep diabetes away, a big heart disease risk factor.

If you put more movement into your life, control your blood pressure and cholesterol, and eat better, you'll be doing a lot for your heart.

There are risk factors you can't control. If you have any of these, the previous advice is even more important: Heredity (it runs in the family), you are African American, you are a man, or you are a woman over age 50.

Coffee Filters... who knew!!

1. Cover bowls or dishes when cooking in the microwave. Coffee filters make excellent covers.
2. Clean windows and mirrors. Coffee filters are lint-free so they'll leave windows sparkling.
3. Protect China. Separate your good dishes by putting a coffee filter between each dish.
4. Filter broken cork from wine. If you break the cork when opening a wine bottle, filter the wine through a filter.
5. Protect a cast-iron skillet. Place a coffee filter in the skillet to absorb moisture and prevent rust.
6. Apply shoe polish. Ball up a lint-free coffee filter.
7. Recycle frying oil. After frying, strain oil through a sieve lined with a coffee filter.
8. Weigh chopped foods. Place chopped ingredients in a filter on a kitchen scale.
9. Hold tacos. Coffee filters make convenient wrappers for messy foods.
10. Stop the soil from leaking out of a plant pot. Line a plant pot with a coffee filter to prevent the soil from going through the drainage holes.
11. Prevent a popsicle from dripping. Poke one or two holes as needed in a filter.
12. Do you think we used expensive strips to wax eyebrows? Use strips of coffee filters.
13. Put a few in a plate and put your fried foods (bacon, french fries, chicken, etc.) on them. Soaks out all the grease.
14. Keep in the bathroom. They make great "razor nick fixers".



Information worth repeating.....

We all carry our mobile phones with names and numbers stored in its memory but nobody, other than ourselves, knows which of these numbers belong to our closest family or friends.

ICE—'In Case of Emergency'

If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but wouldn't know who to call. Yes, there are hundreds of numbers stored but which one is the contact person in case of emergency?

Hence the 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency) Campaign

The concept of 'ICE' is catching on quickly. It is a method of contact during emergency situations. As cell (mobile) phones are carried by the majority of the population, all you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the name 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency).

The idea was thought up by a paramedic who found that when he went to the scenes of accidents, there were always mobile phones with patients, but they didn't know which number to call. He therefore thought that it would be a good idea if there was a nationally recognized name for this purpose.

In an emergency situation, Emergency Service personnel and hospital staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialing the number you have stored as 'ICE'. For more than one contact name simply enter 'ICE1', 'ICE2', and 'ICE3', etc.

Let's spread the concept of 'ICE' by storing an 'ICE' number in your cell phone today!!

