|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **12/08/23RESOURCE LOG – DECEMBER 2023** | | | | |
| **Article Title** | **Detail** | **Publication** | **Date** | **Author** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| China’s Economy Faces a Sour End to ‘23 | Factory activity slid deeper into contraction in November as domestic and foreign orders dried up, while, in an ominous sign for consumer spending, activity in the services sector shrank for the first time this year,…  China’s huge real-estate sector is mired in a protracted downturn, putting the squeeze on consumer confidence and households’ willingness to spend. House prices fell in 70 major cities at a faster clip in October than a month earlier…  China’s woes add to the headwinds facing the global economy, which is being buffeted by war in Ukraine and the Middle East and a sharp rise in borrowing costs by central banks determined to tame inflation. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/01/2023 | Jason Douglas |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Stocks Log Their Strongest Month since ‘22  *Dow hits yearly high, bonds end November strong as inflation data cheer investors* | U.S. stocks recorded their best month in more than a year, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average climbing Thursday to a 2023 high, while bonds posted their biggest monthly gain in years.  Commerce Department data on Thursday showed that U.S. consumers slowed their spending and that inflation continued to ease in October, boosting expectations that the Federal Reserve is done raising rates.  All three major U.S. stock indexes ended November at least 8% higher, snapping three-month losing streaks. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/01/2023 | Ryan Dezember |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| OPEC+ Agrees to Cut 900,000 More Barrels | OPEC+ agreed to a significant production cut of an additional 900,000 barrels a day, delegates said, in a move that will likely keep prices elevated amid the continuing conflict in the Middle East.  As part of the deal reached Thursday, Saudi Arabia also agreed to extend its cut of 1 million barrels a day that it announced in June.  Taken together, the moves are expected to stabilize prices at a moment when geopolitical tensions are high around the world and economic growth is slowing.  Brent, the most widely traded oil contract, fell 17 cents to $82.83 a barrel Thursday after dropping for most of the past month. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/01/2023 | Summer Said and Benoit Faucon |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦Hopes that the Fed is done raising interest rates turbocharged a broad-based rally. The Dow added 2.4% for the week, notching a fifth weekly gain to mark its longest winning streak since late 2021, while the S&P 500 and Nasdaq added 0.8% and 0.4%, respectively. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/02-03/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Clock Is Ticking On China’s Efforts To Stem Local Debt | China is trying to defuse a financial time bomb that could severely damage its banking system.  Cities and provinces have accumulated a massive amount of hidden debt following years of unchecked borrowing and spending.  China’s economic growth is slowing and the country is battling deflationary pressures that will make it harder for local governments to keep up with their interest and principal payments. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/06/2023 | Rebecca Feng and Cao Li |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Gold Soars on Prospects for Fed Cut  *Bets that lower rates will hurt bond market have lifted the metal to a record* | The prospect that interest rates might have peaked is powering gold prices to record highs.  Futures for delivery of gold in December settled at $2,071 a troy ounce Friday, topping their previous high of $2,051.50 an ounce hit in August 2020. Gold has advanced for seven of the past eight weeks, bringing its gain this year to 11%. That puts futures on track for their best annual performance since 2020…  People often buy the precious metal as protection against inflation, but inflation is falling.  Many cite the potential for rate cuts from the Federal Reserve as a factor behind gold’s current climb.  Bond yields have dropped sharply, including on an inflation-adjusted basis.  Investors often turn to gold instead of bonds when inflation-adjusted yields-known as real yields-decline.  Investors tend to buy gold when they are nervous. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/06/2023 | Bob Henderson and Yusuf Khan |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ A rally in Treasurys dragged yields on 10-year notes to 4.121%, the lowest level since August, while stocks fell with the Dow, S&P 500 and Nasdaq declining 0.2%, 0.4% and 0.6%, respectively. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/07/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Investors Seek Answers as Inflation Falls | Encouraging inflation data recently propelled a big rally across markets, with a traditional portfolio of stocks and bonds in November delivering one of its best returns of the past 30 years.  Confident that the Federal Reserve is now cruising to its goal of 2% inflation, investors have dialed up bets that the central bank will start cutting interest rates by spring to prevent a recession. That would mark the end of an inflation-fighting campaign…  Still, the Fed’s preferred inflation gauge remains elevated at around 3%. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/08/2023 | Sam Goldfarb |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| S&P 500 Extends Gain To Six Weeks in a Row | Markets ticked higher to end the week after closely watched jobs data came in slightly hotter than expectations.  The unemployment rate slipped to 3.7%.  Stocks have rallied and bond yields have dropped since the beginning of November as investors have bet that the Federal Reserve will get inflation under control without causing a steep recession.  Cryptocurrency exchange Coinbase Global’s shares rose 7.7% to the highest level since April 2022. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/09-10/2023 | Jack Pitcher |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ A gradual cooling of the labor market extended into November, renewing optimism the economy is still on a glide path for a soft landing. Employers added a seasonally adjusted 199,000 jobs and the jobless rate fell to 3.7%. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/09-10/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ The S&P 500 closed 0.4% higher and posted its sixth straight weekly gain, and the Nasdaq and Dow also each rose 0.4%. All three indexes closed at highs for the year. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/09-10/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Bond Auctions Put Market on Edge | Whether the market can absorb the rolling waves of debt without disruption is the biggest question on Wall Street ahead of this week’s planned Treasury auctions.  The last 30-year auction was so poorly received that it rattled other parts of the markets. Investors fear that signs of weak demand might spread similar tumult, raise the cost of government borrowing and hurt the economy. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/11/2023 | Eric Wallerstein |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Home-Buying Math No Longer Adds Up | Many would-be buyers were already feeling stretched thin by home prices that shot quickly higher in the pandemic, but at least mortgage rates were low. Now that they are high, many people are just giving up.  It is now less affordable than any time in recent history to buy a home, and the math isn’t changing any time soon.  In mortgages, higher rates add up fast. An increase of just a few percentage points can mean hundreds of thousands of dollars more in interest over the life a standard 30-year loan.  First-time and young buyers are still stuck on the sidelines. | The Wal Street Journal | 12/12/2023 | Gina Heeb |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s New | ♦ Treasury Secretary Yellen said the U.S. economy is on a path toward taming inflation without a deep economic slowdown, achieving a so-called soft landing. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/13/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Inflation Moderates But Stays Too High For Fed | Inflation has stabilized late this year at well below last year’s high but still above pre-pandemic levels, tempering hopes for near-term Federal Reserve rate cuts and maintaining price and interest-rate pressures on weary Americans.  Cost declines for gasoline and long-lasting goods in November mostly offset price increases for housing, auto insurance and some other services. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/13/2023 | Gabriel T. Rubin and Nick Timiraos |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Dow, S&P Hit Highest Levels since 2022 | Fresh inflation data kept investors’ soft-landing hopes alive, propelling stocks upward.  All three indexes closed at 52-week highs for a third session in a row. The S&P 500 and Dow rose to their highest closing levels since January 2022, while the Nasdaq reached its highest close since March 2022. The major indexes are going on their seventh consecutive week of gains.  November’s consumer-price report is the latest to suggest the U.S. economy is slowing enough to tame inflation but not enough for the country to enter a recession. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/13/2023 | Hannah Miao |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Fed Starts The Pivot Toward Lowering Rates  *Officials don’t rule out further increases while penciling in three eases in 2024* | The Fed held its benchmark federal-funds rate steady at a 22-year high on Wednesday and offered every reason to think that its most recent increase this past July probably marked the end of the most aggressive cycle of rises in four decades. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/14/2023 | Nick Timiraos |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Dow Tops Record On Hopes for Cuts | The Dow Jones Industrial Average became the first major U.S. stock index to set a record since the Federal Reserve started raising interest rates.  Investors on Wednesday drove the blue-chip index up 512.30 points to 37090.24, after Federal Reserve officials penciled in three interest-rate cuts next year at the conclusion of their December meeting.  The 30-stock index has risen for six consecutive weeks and is up 12% this year.  The Dow fell more than 8,000 points, or 22%, to its low in September 2022, before making a sharp U-turn. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/14/2023 | Hardika Singh |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ The ECB and the Bank of England held interest rates steady as rich countries’ central banks begin to reposition themselves for a world in which inflation is under control. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/15/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ A surprise increase in November retail sales dispelled lingering pessimism about the economy and reinforced growing sentiment that the U.S. will beat inflation without paying the price in significantly weaker growth. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/15/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Market Rally Muddles Fight Over Inflation  *Some investors worry economy is too strong to expect a series of rate cuts* | Investors’ growing confidence that interest rates have peaked drove the Dow Jones Industrial Average to a record for the second straight day, intensifying debate about whether the rally stands to complicate the Federal Reserve’s fight against inflation.  The T&P 500 settled at its highest level since January 2022. The yield on the benchmark 10-year U.S. Treasury note, which falls when bond prices rise, dropped below 4% to settle at 3.929%, its lowest close since late July. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/15/2023 | Eric Wallerstein |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Stocks Gain, Benchmark Treasury Yield Falls Below 4% | Stocks extended their year-end rally. The S&P 500 rose 0.3%, the Nasdaq Composite gained 0.2% and the Dow Jones Industrial Average increased 0.4% to a record 37248.35.  A strong rally in bonds since then has helped propel other assets. Bond yields fell, with the benchmark 10-year U.S. Treasury yield falling below 4% for the first time since August. The S&P 500, now p 23% in 2023, is just 1.6% off a record. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/15/2023 | Jack Pitcher |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ The Dow set a record for a third straight day Friday, as it rose 0.2%. The S&P 500 slipped 0.01% and the Nasdaq gained 0.4%. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/16-17/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ Fed officials offered competing views of when they might begin to lower interest rates next year after Chair Powell suggested they were likely done raising them. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/16-17/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Big Seven In Tech Sector Dominate Market  *Stocks have jumped 75% in 2023 and make up about 30% of S&P 500’s value* | Collectively, the stocks known as the Magnificent Seven – Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon.com, Nvidia, Tesla and Meta Platforms-have jumped 75% in 2023, leaving the other 493 companies in the S&P 500 in their dust. (Those have risen a more modest 12%, while the index as a whole is up 23%.)  The Magnificent Seven stocks have swelled to represent about 30% of the S&P 500’s market value… | The Wall Street Journal | 12/18/2023 | Hardika Singh |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ The Dow set its fifth straight record, rising 0.7% as investor optimism about the U.S. economy grew. The S&P 500 gained a 0.6% and the Nasdaq advanced 0.7%. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/20/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Investors’ Optimism Has Fed Officials Uneasy | Powell is finally getting what he wanted: A meaningful decline in inflation. But that is creating a familiar headache by making it harder for Fed officials, who want to keep their options open, to dissuade investors that rate cuts are imminent.  After their policy meeting last week, Fed officials released projections of at least three rate cuts next year. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/20/2023 | Nick Timiraos |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ The S&P 500 closed out its eighth consecutive week of gains Friday. The benchmark index and the Nasdaq each rose 0.2%, while the Dow edged down almost 0.1%. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/23-24/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Inflation Ebbs, Confidence Rises, Easing Concern About Slowdown | The Fed’s preferred inflation measure, the personal-consumption expenditures price index, fell 0.1% in November from the previous month, the first decline since April 2020, the Commerce Department said Friday. Prices were up 2.6% on the year, not far from the Fed’s 2% target.  Core prices, which exclude volatile food and energy costs, rose just 1.9% on a six-month annualized basis, suggesting the Fed is well on its way to reaching the target. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/23-24/2023 | David Harrison and Amara Omeokwe |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| What’s News | ♦ China’s CSI 300 stock index is down about 14$ this year, putting it on track for its third consecutive year of declines, as shares joined other Chinese asset classes that disappointed investors in 2023. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/26/2023 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Investors Sour on EV Charging Companies | The companies that install and operate electric-vehicle charging networks are in the middle of a building boom, but their share prices are sputtering.  Companies say that with more EVs hitting the road, their chargers are in use more steadily – an important metric for the burgeoning industry. However, selling jolts of electricity to drivers still isn’t a moneymaker because of relatively low use rates. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/27/2023 | Jennifer Hiller |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Electric Vehicles Lose Momentum in the U.S. | Electric-vehicle sales growth hit a speed bump in the U.S. this year, and the impact is being felt through the industry.  Car executives say they are confident that sales will accelerate as additional lower-priced models come out and the availability of public chargers improves.  In the near term, the cooling buyer interest has weighed on U.S. makers… | The Wall Street Journal | 12/28/2023 | Sean McLain and Nate Rattner |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Stocks Rise, With S&P500 Just Shy Of Record | Stocks inched higher Thursday, putting the S&P 500 on pace for its longest weekly winning streak in nearly 20 years.  The broad index gained 0.04% to 4783.35. the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite fell 0.03% to 15095.14, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.1% to 37710.10.  Markets are ending 2023 on a hot streak. All three indexes are on pace for a ninth consecutive weekly gain.  With one trading session remaining 2023, the S&P 500 is up 25%.  Optimism that the Federal Reserve can successfully cool inflation without inducing a major economic slowdown has powered the market’s recent advance.  Stocks often rise at year-end because investors typically wait to sell stocks that have appreciated to avoid paying taxes. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/29/2023 | Charley Grant |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Why Everyone Got ’23 Wrong | My biggest error in 2023 was the same as everyone else’s: being in the consensus that the fastest rate hikes in 40 years would cause a recession.  ♦ It was transitory after all. Supply disruptions caused by the pandemic went away, and the shifts in demand to goods, then back to services, have begun to even out.  ♦ The government filled the gap. Massive unfinanced spending means all levels of U.S. government will run a deficit of more than 8% of GDP in 2023, according to the International Monetary fund.  ♦ Rates didn’t bite. There was pain for those with floating-rate loans: Auto-loan and credit-card delinquencies are on the rise, as are defaults by companies in weak business lines such as office rental. The same goes for banks that have to pay more on deposits than they are getting on bonds they bought when rates were low. But the core of the economy has been fine…  ♦ The Fed offset its own tightening. Lending on easy terms, the Fed stepped in to rescue regional banks in March after the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank.  Fed was no longer tightening policy, even though the price of money, the interest rate, kept going up.  What happens next depends on which of the four explanations had the most effect in 2023.  Government spending is unlikely to be scaled back drastically in an election year…  Put it all together, and the outlook is for weaker growth, which is bad for stocks, and lower rates, which are good for stocks. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/30-31/2023 | James Mackintosh |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Market Forecasts Missed Mark In 2023  *U.S. stocks end a topsy-turvy year near records despite bearish predictions* | The S&P 500 finished the year up 24%, just 0.6% from its January 2022 record. The Dow Jones Industrial Average advanced 14% to top 37000 for the first time and set seven record closes in the final days of 2023. A mania surrounding artificial intelligence and big technology stocks sent the Nasdaq composite soaring 43%, its best year since 2020.  It is a far cry from the doom and gloom many were bracing for at the start of 2023.  A year ago, everyone from the strategists as Wall Street banks to rap artist Cardi B was calling for a recession. Instead, inflation continued falling, consumers kept spending and the unemployment rate fell to 3.4%, the lowest level since 1969.  The 10-year Treasury yield ended the year at 3.860%, while the 2-year Treasury notched its biggest yearly decline since 2020, settling at 4.248%.  Some investors say the strength shows that market moves often don’t align with scary situations around the globe.  The impact on markets was limited, and Brent crude futures ended the year down 10% at $77.04 a barrel, the biggest annual fall since 2020.  To be sure, many investors say it is premature to declare the Fed has pulled off a soft landing.  Few anticipated that a mania over artificial intelligence would help power stocks to new heights.  The enthusiasm propelled tech shares higher, helping mask poor performance in other corners of the market. Nvidia more than tripled to lead the S&P 500. The Magnificent Seven replaced FANG (or FAANG) as the favored nickname for the market’s leaders. | The Wall Street Journal | 12/33-31/2023 | Gunjan Banerji |
|  |  |  |  |  |

The World Bank estimated that in 2023, 691 million people (or 8.6% of the global population) will be living in extreme poverty, which would represent the lowest proportion in human history. *Future Crunch, October 12, 2023*

The material has been prepared or distributed solely for information purposes and is not a solicitation or an offer to buy any security or instrument or to participate in any trading strategy. This material contains information from sources believed to be reliable, however, the accuracy and completeness of the information is not guaranteed.

Any opinions and forecasts expressed in this material are those as of January 2024 and are subject to change at any time, based on market and other conditions.  There is no guarantee that the current market will yield the same results as those in the past. The investment return and principal value of securities will fluctuate and may be worth more or less than original cost when sold.  Diversification does not assure or guarantee better performance and cannot eliminate the risk of investment losses.

Market Indexes are commonly accepted benchmarks for certain classes of securities.  Market indexes are comprised of individual stocks or bonds which are not actively managed and cannot be purchased directly by investors.

Because investors’ situations and objectives vary, this material is not intended to indicate suitability for any particular investor.

Investments are not FDIC-insured, nor are they deposits of or guaranteed by a bank or any other entity.

We believe the sources to be reliable, however, the accuracy and completeness of the information is not guaranteed. In the event of any discrepancy, the sponsor’s valuation shall prevail.

Securities and advisory services offered through Independent Financial Group LLC, a registered broker-dealer and investment advisor, Member FINRA/SIPC. (OSJ: 12671 High Bluff Dr. Ste. 200, San Diego, CA 92130) Independent Financial Group LLC and Juengling & Associates are independently owned and operated.

Prepared by James M. Juengling.

Juengling & Associates