



Just for Fun

"What I know for sure is that what you give comes back to you."

OPRAH WINFREY

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Seventy-five percent of baby boomers polled for a new retirement preparedness study, conducted on behalf of *Retirement Living*, thought they would have enough money to live comfortably in their "second act" after their careers ended.¹

BRAIN TEASER

There is a nine-letter word starting with S and ending with G, and you can selectively remove one letter at a time from this word and still have a word in the English language, from nine letters right down to a single letter. What is this nine-letter word?

DID YOU KNOW?

Cinemas once had a chapeau alert

Between the World Wars, many movie theatres had signs asking women to remove their hats during a screening. In that era, some women wore hats large enough to obstruct the view of other moviegoers. (For that matter, so did some men.)²

What A Government Shutdown Can Teach Investors

It was only about two weeks into the government shutdown that we began to see media stories highlighting government workers (and the thousands of local business owners who support them) who were beginning to struggle financially. There were reports of people resorting to food banks. Others were putting bills onto credit cards. Some were turning to bank or mortgage lines of credit to obtain cash but were unable to secure them. And many were attempting to negotiate with landlords and creditors for relief from upcoming payments. When the shutdown ended, many were left in a financial bind.

While the media focus has been directed at the financial struggles the shutdown created, a question that remained unasked was: how can a few weeks without pay become such a crisis for so many people?



The answer to that question can be both simple and complicated. The simple, but harsh reality, is that almost 80% of Americans live from paycheck to paycheck and have little or no savings. A general rule of thumb is to have savings set aside to cover three to six months of expenses. And it should be one of the first things people do for their financial planning (yes, even before putting money into an IRA). Without these savings, people put their financial well-being into the hands of things completely out of their control (like a government shutdown, an accident, or health issue).



If you need to set up an emergency fund, now is a good time to start. Why? The obvious reason is so that you'll be ready for an emergency. But consider also that interest rates are creeping up meaning that the cost to borrow is going up. Credit card interest rates are back up to where

they were in 2000 and will likely climb higher in the future. And while unemployment rates are low now, history suggests they never stay that way, particularly when we hit the inevitable recession. Better to not bet against future layoffs at a time when credit may be quite expensive.

The complicated part of the question as to why a few weeks without pay causes such a crisis is ... well, more complicated. Wage levels, cost-of-living, personal



Homemade Ranch Salad Dressing³

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup buttermilk or regular milk
- 3/4 - 1 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon dried chives
- 1/4 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1/8 teaspoon finely cracked pepper
- freshly squeezed lemon juice to taste approximately 1-3 teaspoons, adjust to taste

Whisk together the mayo, sour cream and milk until smooth. Add the spices and whisk until combined. Add the lemon and whisk again. Pour into a jar and chill in the refrigerator until ready to serve. This dressing will keep nicely in the refrigerator for up to a week.

situations and myriad other factors come into play. Many of these issues are out of a person's control and do not have easy solutions. And while I want to be sensitive to these issues, history does tell us that when the economy is favorable – as it is now – Americans tend to increase their *spending* and not necessarily *save* more. So there are still many people who can choose to start saving and begin building an emergency fund.

If you need to shore up your emergency fund, there's no better time than now to start. And if you, or someone you know, needs help getting started, let us know. Perhaps together we can find a way to get started.



News from Aspen Creek Investments

Tax season is approaching and many of you will be scheduling appointments with your tax advisor. Remember that not all tax forms are required to be sent by January 31. To avoid problems, wait to schedule your tax appointments until late February or early March.

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Contact us for fun and informative topics including:

- How Our Behavior Affects Our Finances
- Social Security for Women
- Hack-Proof Your Life



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*** TRIVIA ANSWER: Stumped? Contact me for the answer! 720-330-1013**

¹ planadviser.com/boomers-far-confident-retirement-gen-xers/ [1/23/19]

² mentalfloss.com/amazingfactgenerator/554068/1920s-and-30s-many-movie-theaters-had-signs-instructing-ladies-please-remove-your-hats [1/9/19]

³ www.barefeetinthekitchen.com