

It's that time of year again, saying goodbye to last year and welcoming in a new one. In our industry, it's also a time of predictions for the markets. After 42 years, I've become a bit cynical and have yet to see a focused report grilling analysts and economists on why they had last year's predictions so wrong. A little over a year ago, the consensus was the Federal Reserve had NEVER navigated a soft landing by raising interest rates to tackle inflation, historically pushing the economy into some kind of recession. 2023 proved them wrong as the consumer stayed strong despite rising rates and inflation is approaching the Fed's mandate. The prevalent forecast for 2024 is a recession (mild or severe) with three interest rate cuts to soften the blow. As I've shared often, what I worry about is what we don't know as those events (black swans) seem to have the most impact on the markets. Given the unreliability of forecasting, we continue to advocate long-term investment strategies with liquidity set aside for shorter-term needs and stay the course.

It's also the time of year for sending best wishes for the new year. While we wholeheartedly agree with the sentiment, it can ring hollow given the strife and challenges faced around the world. I readily admit to occasionally putting my head in the sand barely giving the photos of the ravages of war and environmental catastrophes a cursory, at best, glance. Charlie often said he wanted to make certain he made a difference, big or small. In keeping with that outlook and the Cameron Wealth Planning tradition, we have made gifts to the following organizations with gratitude for our clients.

From Donna Wanless (for those of you who have met in our offices, Donna is the spark of joy you first see). – *I would like to support the Parkinson's Resources of Oregon. My dad had Parkinson's that progressed in the last eight years of his life. I would like to see support grow in the Parkinson's community. Donna lost her dad in 2023 after a valiant fight with Parkinson's.*

From Juliann Romain (I think everyone knows that it is Juliann who manages everything with efficiency, grace, and humor when needed). – *I would like to support Montana Wildlife Federation. My uncle passed away unexpectedly this year. He was an avid outdoorsman, and my family is deeply rooted in Montana. This is an organization I know he supported that also aligns with my values.*

From Lyn Cameron – *I am supporting Anthony's Circle this year. It's a grassroots organization supporting foster kids in the Oregon Public School system. I used to tell people I had a normal childhood and recognize now that being raised by two well-educated parents with an abundance of love and enough resources to provide extraordinary opportunities to their five children is rare. Of the more than 8,640 Oregon youth who experience foster care, only 35% graduate from high school. Anthony's Circle is working to change this.*

We do wish you all the best for 2024 and we will continue to do our best to make a difference.



"The best ability is availability. When you work with and for the best people in the business and you love what you do, showing up every day is a joy, but more than that, it is a privilege." -Charlie Cameron

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