

LAYIN' IT ON THE LINE

Steve Kerby



Bulls, bears and the deer

"I have a million dollars in the stock market because if I lose a million dollars, I don't personally care." Suze Orman, as once quoted in the *New York Times*.

Many financial experts sell the path to success by using their all-knowing system. Suze Orman, Dave Ramsey, Jim Kramer and most of the players in the financial expertise game, who write books or have talk shows or podcasts, have made fortunes giving people advice. Suze Orman's quote sets the tone for many of these experts; she makes money giving them advice, money from those searching for help.

Let me break down the concept of investing to a very basic level. Animals can help us understand how the market dictates movement, up or down.

The financial world can seem much like a zoo. Over the years, many terms now used derived from animals you may find at the zoo. The reason is simple — the animal terms are easy for people to relate to. For example, a bear hibernates, so if the market is in decline or negativity about investing is in circulation, it might be time not to invest or "hibernate." The bull represents aggression and growth; thus, a bull market signifies growth.

In years past, many financial terms have used animals as a synonym, such as a duck, which meant floating along without any direction and doing nothing except quacking. Or a fish that meant to take a chance and buy any stock that looked reasonable regardless of any specific goal. Over time, we have three animal terms as surviving topics.

Bear: The word normally associated with a bear market is pessimism. In other words, a feeling that the market will go down or may stay down. Investors fearing a down market are negative to investing. Or, like a bear, they go to sleep and do not invest. Many short-term investors often confuse a bear market with a correction, and a market correction is usually a shorter time period of about 1-3 months.

Bull: A bull market is just the opposite of a bear market. Bulls are aggressive and think the market will grow and increase. Just like a bull, the market is expected to be hard to control and is heading up. Bull markets are optimistic and confident; bulls thrust their horns up in the air signifying a belief in growth in the market.

Deer: Not often used by many investors but still meaningful. A deer market is a market doing nothing, simply staying neutral or flat. It can be a time of low activity with a specific definition much like the bull and bear market definitions: timidity. The market is not trending in any real direction, staying flat. As investors, most people will follow trends, up, down or neutral. It all depends on your view of what the market will do.

The best approach to investing might be to have your goals evaluated and your investments redirected to an allocation that makes sense over the long run. There is an old saying about investing in the stock market: "The bulls make money, the bears make money, but the pigs get slaughtered."

Investing for specific goals is a solid approach. As you edge closer to your anticipated goal, many smart investors begin the move toward safety. Annuities can be a solid choice for you when it becomes your turn to run to safety.

For the most part, watching financial television shows or videocasts is a harmless habit. You may glean a few pieces of wisdom here and there or discover a viable retirement and income strategy. Consuming this type of media content can also help you keep money matters top of mind. Still, if you are within 10 years of retirement, you should consider finding an expert in the "spend-down" part of finances.

Remember the Golden Rule many professional advisers and experts do not want you to know. The reason they do not want you to know this secret is if you did, you would no longer need theirs or anyone else's advice.

Everyone at some time in their life runs to safety. Maybe it is time for you to re-think your retirement vehicles?

As an avid outdoorsman, Joseph and the Wallowa area have been a big part of Steve Kerby's life since 1964. Steve is a Syndicated Columnists member, a national organization committed to a fully transparent approach to money management. With over 50 years in the financial services industry, Steve specializes and focuses on each individual client's goals. Visit stevekerby.retirevillage.com or call 503-936-3535 for more.

KICKING the CAN DOWN the ROAD



2030



Dick Wright CAGLEARTOONS

2021



2035



2025



20??



Consider what it means to be an American

ON LIBERTY

Devin Patton



In Congress, July 4, 1776
 "WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness — That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. ..."

As we reflect on the celebration of our nation's Independence Day, it seems prudent to consider what exactly it means to be a citizen of the United States of America. Growing up, my wife was often encouraged (required) by her parents to write short

essays any time she was home from school in honor of a public holiday, with the objective of cultivating a richer understanding of our nation's history and values.

Since July 4th always occurred during summer break, research and writing on the topic of Independence Day was generally left for in-school assignments. Many of us memorized some (or all) of our nation's founding documents during our time in school, but unfortunately today people know very little about these documents, or our government in general. A 2017 CNN article entitled "Americans know literally nothing about the Constitution" cited polling from the University of Pennsylvania that exposed the disheartening condition of civil ignorance in our country. The research found that only about one in four Americans could name all three branches of the government. One in four.

This year, my wife and I had the honor of helping our 5-year-old daughter begin to memorize the preamble to the Declaration of Independence. Children are such sponges. It inspired my wife and I to recommit these lines to memory as well, but sadly the data suggest that those who take the time to memorize and learn about our founding documents are in the minority.

As I ponder what it means to be an American, I can readily see values of liberty, independence and freedom coursing through both the Declaration of Independence as well as our Constitution. These ideals are important, but I assert they are not supreme. We read, tucked in the last line of the Declaration of Independence, these weighty words: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

With firm reliance on the protection of

divine providence, we pledge, to each other, our lives, fortunes, and our sacred honor. One after another, each of the signers of the Declaration approached the table to sign what was, in the words of Pennsylvania's Benjamin Rush, "believed by many to be our own death warrants."

These are not the words of anarchist rebels seeking to "live their best life" free of responsibility and the hindrances of social structures or law. These are the words of devoted kinsmen, united not by blood, skin tone or social class, but by common purpose and conviction.

I ask you, in this present time of racial, gender, political and cultural tension, are you willing to consider what it means to be an American? Will you consider what it would look like to be united not by blood or skin color or common hobbies or geographical location, but by a deep unity in purpose, conviction and brotherly love? Pause to contemplate the magnitude of pledging to another your life, fortune, and sacred honor in order to support the tenets of our founding documents.

The weekend festivities are over, but we are left with the opportunity to remember, presently and for years to come, the importance of our nation's founding principles as well as the sacrifices required in order to protect them. Patriots of this day continue to pledge their lives in defense of liberty, the same kind of liberty that allows us to burn our nation's flag, protest our soldiers and riot in the name of "peace."

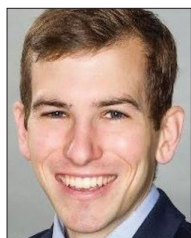
Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Devin Patton is a third-generation Wallowa County native whose pastimes include the study of ag economics, history and free thought.

Oregon needs an independent voice in D.C.

OTHER VIEWS

Kevin Frazier



In the 2019 legislative year, there were 236 Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives, four of whom were from Oregon. Out of those 236, though, the Oregonians were nearly indistinguishable from the rest of the Democratic block.

Reps. Suzanne Bonamici, Earl Blumenauer, and Peter DeFazio all recorded nearly perfect party-line records; CQ Press reported their party unity scores as 99 out of 100; Rep. Kurt Schrader came in at 93. Comparatively, on the other side of the aisle, then-Rep. Greg Walden had a far lower party-unity score of just 81.

On the whole, these scores go to show that Oregonians have lacked an independent voice in D.C. Sure, Oregon's Democratic representatives have spoken out against their party from time to time and, though less frequently, even voted against their ideological colleagues; but, from a voting record perspective, there's nothing distinctive about the state's congressional delegates — especially on the Democratic side.

In defense of Oregon's Democratic delegates, they're just following a much larger

trend. The average party unity score in 2019 for House Democrats was 97.6 — up from 75.8 in 1983.

Oregonians have a chance to elect a voice, rather than an echo, in their sixth congressional district.

Now more than ever, independent voices in the House have a chance to sway the conversation by virtue of the fact that neither party has a controlling presence in the chamber. Right now, there's 219 Democrats, 212 Republicans and four vacancies.

Electing independent representatives in a handful of districts would upend politics as usual by forcing both parties to cater to this party-free caucus.

Of course, the odds of state legislators drawing an independent district are low. It's in the interest of both parties to draw "safe" seats. These are seats with such skewed party registration differentials that it's a Sisyphean act for someone from the other side to run a credible campaign.

These sorts of seats save both parties money because the general elections are so uncompetitive. They also reinforce the faulty idea that we're stuck with two options when it comes to our elected officials and, therefore, entrench the dominance of the two parties.

So as legislators start to redistrict, Democrats will push for a map that has five safe, blue seats and that offers the Republicans one safe, red seat; Republicans will push for a four-two map. Neither will advocate for a purple district.

That's why the rest of us, the voters of Oregon, must do so.

A competitive district in Oregon will give at least some Oregonians a meaningful choice every election cycle. The two parties will have to put forth their best candidates, and third party or nonaffiliated candidates may even have a chance at running competitive races. This district can become an example of the sort of democratic competition that voters have long been denied due to closed primaries, gerrymandered districts and undue influence afforded to ideologically exclusive parties.

If just a few other states take this brave approach of thwarting party efforts to draw safe seats, then we could see the emergence of U.S. Representatives capable of offering their voice and not merely an echo of the party line.

Our democracy is not broken; it's fixed. The rules, the game board and the players are tilted to two sides.

Let's create space for an independent voice in Oregon again; someone who can truthfully share these same lines from Sen. Wayne Morse: "I will exercise an independence of judgment based on the evidence of each issue. I will weigh the views of my constituents and party, but cast my vote free of political pressure and unmoved by threats of loss of political support."

Kevin Frazier was raised in Washington County. He is pursuing a law degree at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.