# iNVESTMENT FORUM AGENDA FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014, 11:50AM, TA-1

The Forum will meet at 11:50AM through November 12

Sy Sherman is the Forum Moderator this week. sysherman@aol.com

***Market Perspective.*** Volatility was the name of the game last week. The VIX doubled. (VIX is something we don't talk much about . . . would anybody like to discuss it?) The epicenter of last week's gyrations took place just before meeting on Wednesday, when a number of highly leveraged hedge funds had margin calls and had to dump their holdings. But after Friday's rally, for the week the markets were down 1% for the DOW and S&P, and the NASDAQ was down 0.4%. The S&P is down 6.6% since its high on September 19. For all the anxiety and drama, this is still a mild pullback.

And interest rates and oil prices continue to drop.

Some sectors are in a bear market. Surely there are some stocks worth buying . . .

***Alibaba (BABA.)*** Sy Sherman will present his analysis of Alibaba. He will present a description of the company and their component parts as well as basic performance metrics, including revenue, earnings and sales. Also planned is a summary comparison to Amazon (AMZN,) one of Alibaba's primary competitors.

***RMDs.*** John Woods will discuss strategies for taking Required Minimum Distributions from retirement savings.

***Oil.*** Tom Crooker will look at Big Oil, and how new technology, the current "oil glut," and falling oil prices may impact various parts of the energy sector.

***Retirement Savings Portfolios and Withdrawals (continued.)*** The AAII (American Association of Individual Investors) program this past Saturday featured Christine Benz of Morningstar, "Strategies for Pursuing Your Retirement Paycheck." It discussed retirement portfolios and withdrawal strategies - similar to what we discussed last week, but with a bit more detail. Her presentation will be posted on the AAII DC Metro website, aaiidcmetro.com, sometime this week.

***Upcoming Agenda Topics.*** Sometime over the next few weeks, I will discuss the fundamentals of funds - mutual funds, exchange traded funds, and closed-end funds: how they are set up; how they are traded, characteristics, tax efficiency, use of leverage, and premiums and discounts. Then I will talk about bond CEFs, which can generate good yields (over 6%) for those alert investors who understand them and their peculiar risks.

***Upcoming Panel Discussions.*** Between now and year-end, I will schedule panels to discuss the following topics:

- ***"Evaluating Mutual Fund Performance."*** How do you tell which mutual funds are performing well, and which are not? Morningstar and other services rate funds. Are these reliable? What metrics do you use?

- ***"To Convert or Not."*** This panel will discuss whether or not to convert to a Roth IRA.

These panels will have two to four participants, each of whom will give five to ten minutes of comments, followed by panel and member discussion. I will schedule the dates with the participants. Please let me know if you are interested in serving on one of the panels.

***Buys and Sells (week ending 10/15/2014)***

Buys
Exact Sciences Corp (EXAS) (2 buys) - colorectal cancer screening. MC: $2B
Cisco Systems (CSCO)
Hewlett-Packard (HPQ)
iShares Transportation Average (IYT)
Intercontinental Exchange Inc (ICE)
Exxon Mobil (XOM)
Micron Technology Inc (MU) - memory chips. MC: $31B
US Bancorp (USB)
Alerian MLP ETF (AMLP)
CSX Corp (CSX)
Costco (COST)

Sells
General Electric (GE)
Janus Research Fund (JAMRX)
Covered call on Ford (F)

Thinking About . . .
Avago Technologies LTD (AVG) - semiconductors. MC: $20B
Morgan Stanley (MS)
Procter & Gamble (PG)
American Express (AXP)

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