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New Website & Resource Center



By visiting our new website you will find information regarding social security benefits, Medicare health plans, long term care, risk assessments and how to leverage technology in retirement. Be sure to check out the Free Guides, reports, videos and risk assessment tools available to help you navigate through the unpredictable waters of retirement. To stay updated subscribe to my blogs and posts on social media.



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Financial Focus

A Monthly Insight Into Your Finances

January 2019

Baked Mini Corn Dogs

The perfect appetizer for your winter



INGREDIENTS

1 cup reduced-fat milk
 1 package active dry yeast
 2 teaspoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
 1 cup fine yellow cornmeal
 1 1/4 cups flour
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
 9 hot dogs, halved crosswise
 1 large egg,

DIRECTIONS

Warm the milk to about 110oF in a saucepan; pour into a medium bowl. Sprinkle in the yeast and let soften for about 2 minutes. Stir in the olive oil, brown sugar and cornmeal with a wooden spoon. Add the flour, salt, baking soda and cayenne pepper; stir to make a sticky dough.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead, adding more flour if needed, until smooth but still slightly tacky, about 5 minutes. Shape the dough into a ball, place in a lightly oiled bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise in a warm spot until doubled in size, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Meanwhile, insert a wooden stick or small skewer into each hot dog half, about 1 inch deep; set aside.

Preheat the oven to 450oF and lightly oil a large baking sheet. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface; divide into 18 pieces. With your palms, roll each piece into a 10-inch length. Wrap each piece around a hot dog half, tucking and pressing the edges to seal; place on the baking sheet.

Brush the dough-wrapped dogs with the beaten egg; sprinkle with sesame seeds, if desired. Bake until golden, 15 minutes.

Source: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/baked-mini-corn-dogs-recipe-1972886>

THE SECRET TO RETIREMENT STRATEGY: DO SOMETHING

Retirement is one of those are things that people dream about and dread at the same time.

Retirement dreams vary a great deal from person to person — some people dream of travel, some of spending more time with family, and some of just good, old-fashioned rest and relaxation. Retirement dread, on the other hand, is often very similar from one person to the next. Typically, it revolves around one question: “Will I have enough money in retirement?”

Fortunately, we are here to help reduce the dread and help you spend more time dreaming. That’s because we know the secret to developing a retirement strategy: You have to take action. What that “action” is will change based on your goals. But action is important, and sometimes baby steps can turn into giant leaps, especially when you think about the power of compounding returns.



The earliest known New Year celebrations were in Mesopotamia and date back to 2000 BC.

January is named after Janus, the god with two faces, one facing forward and one looking backward.

Ancient Persians gave New Year’s gifts of eggs, which symbolized productiveness.

Auld Lang Syne (“Times Gone By”) is traditionally sung at midnight on New Year’s Eve. It was written by Scottish poet, Robert Burns in 1788.

The first ball dropping celebration in Times Square was held on December 31, 1907.

In 1942 and 1943, the ball lowering was suspended due to the wartime dimout. Crowds still gathered in Times Square but celebrated with a minute of silence followed by chimes ringing.

The original New Year’s Eve ball weighed 700 pounds and was five feet in diameter. It was made of iron and wood and was decorated with 100 25-watt light bulbs.

Source: <https://www.cnn.com/2013/09/12/world/new-years-fast-facts/index.html>

Do Something: Start Saving.

The sooner you act when it comes to making a plan for retirement, the better off you'll be. It gives you more time to build your retirement savings, and generally, time in the market is more critical to your success than timing in the market.

When we work with clients, one of the first things we do is try to help them figure out their pre-retirement expenses and how they may change in retirement. Once we've done that, we can start to determine if their savings are going to be sufficient enough for their retirement.

If it fits your unique situation, it is best to start saving as soon as possible.

Do Something: Start Planning.

Many people are concerned that they don't have a secure financial strategy for retirement. Others are worried that they won't have enough money set aside to fill an income shortage. In addition, some don't know where to start when preparing for retirement.

Questions on where to start, when to retire and how to go about preparing are commonly brought up by people facing retirement. There is good news though! All these concerns can be addressed with the right retirement strategy and meeting with a financial professional. And again, all of them can be alleviated by starting to prepare.

Do Something: Evaluate Your Situation.

Keep in mind, each person's situation is different, and there is not one strategy that meets everyone's needs. With that in mind, financial services professionals work with each person by listening to their retirement needs and wants and help them decide which strategy works best for them. While everyone's retirement income amount will be different, the general rule of thumb is that a retiree will require 70 to 80 percent of their pre-retirement income to maintain their lifestyle.

Americans are living longer and it is important for them to have retirement savings that won't deplete. However, this phenomenon is causing some Americans to outlive their savings, and unfortunately, many Americans are not considering just how long they may live. Knowing how much you have in savings may be easy, but figuring out how long that will last you, or how long you need it to last you, can be difficult.

Do Something: Evaluate Your Options.

There are many resources available to help you bridge any income shortage you may face in retirement. Some options that may be available to you are IRAs, 401(k)s, life insurance, and more. When exploring these options, it is always encouraged that you seek advice from a retirement professional to help make sure you are making decisions that best effect your retirement and help you achieve your retirement goals and needs.

The key point here is for you to match your income need with the correct retirement strategies, options and tools to satisfy that need. When you take health care costs, potential emergencies, plans for moving or traveling, and other retirement expenses into account, you can really give your calculator a workout.

You want to maximize retirement benefits to meet your lifetime income needs. The best approach is usually crafting a solid income plan and then having a financial services professional help to ensure your assets are properly aligned. This approach may allow you to have an opportunity to capture some growth, maintain an adequate amount of liquidity, while not overreaching.

Do Something: Start Today.

Retirement can be scary, but it doesn't have to be. Contact a financial services professional today to start building your retirement strategy on a solid foundation that may stand the test of time.



It's the old Catch-22. You cannot establish a credit history without having credit, and you cannot get cred-it without a credit history. But if you work at it, this problem can be overcome. While you create a history, be sure your efforts will be reported to the credit bureaus.

Use the credit history of a family member or friend to leverage yourself into credit in your own name. If you are added as a joint party or authorized user to another person's credit card, the lender may report the account's payment history on your credit report.

If you have a checking account, ask your bank for overdraft protection (or cash reserve) privileges. With this feature added to your account, you can create credit by writing a check for an amount greater than the balance in your account (but not greater than the limit of your cash reserve line!). Alternatively, ask the bank for a small personal loan. As you repay these debts, you establish a credit history. Make sure the bank reports that history to the credit bureaus.

Secured credit cards are also a good way to get started. Your credit line is secured by your deposit in the bank, minimizing the creditor's risk. For example, if you deposit \$500 in the bank, you get a credit card with a maximum limit of \$500. As you use the card and make payments, you establish a credit history. These cards have high interest rates, but your goal is only to charge what you can afford to repay. As you repay the debt, you establish a repayment pattern seen by other creditors.

You may also want to see if you qualify for a retail/department store charge card or gas card. Because these cards have lower credit limits and may be used only with the companies that issue them, the lending guidelines may be more liberal than those for major credit cards.

If you still have difficulty obtaining credit in your own name, consider a collateralized or cosigned loan. With a collateralized loan, the item you pledge as collateral (such as a car) minimizes the risk to the credit grantor. With a cosigned loan, your cosigner is equally liable for the balance. Spreading the responsibility for repayment in this fashion minimizes the lender's risk. Successful repayment of these types of loans can then be used to establish your own credit history.

For assistance reviewing your retirement plan, contact [OFFICE] at [PHONE].

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