



HIGHTOWER  
White Pine Wealth Management

## March 2023



March is like a house of cards. Just when you think you're getting somewhere, it can all fall apart with a single four-foot snow storm. But it is an optimistic month, nonetheless, when the earth softens, the sun strengthens, the days lengthen, the frozen streams trickle happily under a fragile layer of ice, and [the official start of spring](#) makes its way around. Here at White Pine Wealth Management, we're looking forward to mud season. Slop, slop, slop...

### Daylight Savings Time...





An early sign of spring in Maine is when they “[post the roads](#)”, a promising bellwether that we’re rounding the bend of winter’s final push. Another annual rite is Daylight Savings Time. ‘I thought they got rid of that?’ you might be asking. [Well, kinda, not really.](#) In 2023, house pets everywhere will rejoice knowing that, at least for another year, they get dinner a whole hour early beginning on Sunday March 12, 2023 at 2am when we will spring ahead and start the day with a little more daylight. If you’re a bit of a zombie surrounding these bi-annual time changes, [here are a few tips](#) for making the adjustment a little less jarring to your system.

Lucky you...



March 17<sup>th</sup> is St. Patrick’s Day. To celebrate, you can visit one of [Maine’s Irish pubs and restaurants](#) for some traditional Celtic fare that is sure to stick to your ribs. Which you’re going to need if you participate in the [Paddy’s Day Plunge 2023](#) at the East End Beach in Portland where thick-skinned Mainers will be jumping into the icy cold water to raise funds for the [Portland Firefighter’s Children’s Burn Foundation](#). If you’re doing the pub scene this year, and you’re not sure about transportation home, [here is a tutorial on how to download and use the Uber app](#) to get a safe ride to and from wherever your celebrations take you. Don’t forget to check out the [Maine Irish Heritage center](#) for events happening this month. The Maine Historical Society has some fascinating information about [Maine’s Irish immigrant](#)

[story](#). And while you'll have to wait a while, don't forget to check out the [Maine Celtic Celebration](#) in July this summer. If pubs and parades aren't your thing, perhaps you're one of many folks all across New England who will make the [traditional Irish-American boiled dinner](#) of, most typically, corned beef and cabbage. The damp cold of March makes it a perfect dish for warming up during mud season in Maine. Best 'o luck to ye. We asked everyone on the team to tell us about a dish that their family has been making either in celebration of their ancestral heritage or as a tradition on a specific holiday. Here's what they had to say:

[Melissa Duffy](#) -

[Shana Bennett](#) -

[Gibson Wilkes](#) -

[Matt Emery](#) -

[Natalie Munn](#) - [New Year's Day Pork and Sauerkraut](#) to bring good luck into the new year. I grew up making sauerkraut with my Aunt and Uncle every year! Lots of work, but very tasty!

[Nancy Mackin](#) -

[Gabrielle Nadeau](#) -

[Casey McClurkin](#) -

[Paige Batchelder](#) - [Pork and cabbage on New Year's Eve](#) is supposed to bring good luck in the new year. My grandmother made it in a pressure cooker (the car bomb of kitchen



appliances). I always figured it was from my Polish grandfather, but my grandmother was Pennsylvania Dutch, which is also a possibility. They love their cabbage.

[Grey Terry](#) -

## Maine Maple Sunday



March 25<sup>th</sup> through March 26<sup>th</sup> is [Maine Maple Sunday weekend](#). If you've never been, it typically consists of a pancake breakfast option, community style, with demonstrations of how they tap trees, boil the sap, and create candy. Growing up in Maine, most people can recall at least one school field trip to the sugar shack to try maple taffy, which is fresh syrup hardened in the snow, probably invented by a clumsy sugarmaker by accident. March in Maine has the right climate conditions for tapping trees because the sap begins to rise when nighttime temperatures are in the 20s, and daytime temperatures are in the 40s. If a whole weekend of sticky fun isn't enough for you, grab a jug of syrup on your way out to make [Salted Maple Pie](#) to keep the celebration going...

## Explore Maine – Cornish



Maine is full of nooks and crannies, small towns that you can miss in the blink of an eye. [Cornish is a little gem](#), west of the Greater Portland area, that is perfect for a day trip. Most people who know Cornish will mention grabbing a bite at Krista's Restaurant, a cozy, comfortable place that offers hefty portions fit for two, amazing sweet potato fries, and indulgent dishes that have nothing to do with your New Year's resolutions. Wear your stretchy pants and skip breakfast so you have plenty of room to enjoy. Stop down the road from Krista's at one of [Cornish's great little shops](#) for antiques, arts, crafts, and more. The Cornish Inn offers lodging accommodations starting in April, and their website gives even [more ideas for things to do](#) in this not-so-sleepy little village. Happy exploring!

## [TCOB...](#)



We can't just spend the whole newsletter telling you all the ways you can have fun in March. This time of year is when you should begin assessing needed maintenance around what may be your biggest investment – your home – and getting a jump on things before problems arise. Things you should be looking at include:

- **Air conditioning units** – Whether you use window units, or central air, take a moment to service these appliances by replacing the filters, cleaning out the condensers, and lubricating the fan motors. HVAC technicians can do this for you, but it's best to call them before the season heats up. If your air conditioning units need replacing, buying new ones now can mean lower costs, and greater availability than months when heat waves create supply problems.
- **Sump Pumps** – With the spring thaw comes a lot of extra water, and if you have a basement that requires a sump pump, now's the time to make sure it's working properly. A flooded basement can be an extreme hassle, but also an insurance headache, and a cleanup nightmare. This article details [highly rated sump pumps](#), and even mentions a battery back up for the times when you lose power but can't afford for the sump pump to be off for an extended period of time. You can also order an alarm for your basement that will notify you via your cell phone that [water has been detected](#).
- **Tree removal** – When the ground begins to soften, trees with shallow root systems are more vulnerable to falling and, depending upon their location, hitting your property and causing damages and injuries. February and March are a [great time to have trees professionally removed](#) because they don't have leaves yet. That can translate to lower labor requirements, making it the most cost-effective time of year to get the job done.
- **Check on your roof** – Make sure to [assess your roof](#) when the snow has melted to see if there was any ice damage during the winter. Higher seasonal rainfall during the spring months means possible leaks into your home from weakened roofing systems, so now is a great time to head that off at the pass. And don't forget to clean out your gutters while you're at it.
- **Evaluate your Homeowner's Insurance policy** – The cost of everything has risen in the last few years, and that includes lumber, materials, appliances, home furnishings, and more. Replacement costs are very different than they were even just a few years ago. Add to that the high cost of real estate pretty much everywhere, and [it's possible you're underinsured](#) for the value of your home and its contents. Take a moment to call your insurance agent to make sure you're adequately insured to cover losses in the current economic environment.



## Reminders



Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 is the 2022 Tax Filing Deadline. A few things to keep in mind:

- Most tax documents have been generated by now, but [some are not due until March 15<sup>th</sup>](#) or after, like K-1 partnership documents.
- [This link explains how to file a tax extension](#) if you're preparing your own taxes and are expecting to have an incomplete return by the deadline.
- If you rolled over a retirement account (this could be a 401k, a 403b, an IRA, etc), [you will be receiving a 5498 in May](#). You should still be able to file your taxes on time for 2022 as the 5498 is only for informational purposes and is not required to be filed with your taxes. However, you should keep it with your tax records for the year in which the rollover occurred.
- If you're planning to make IRA contributions to your Traditional or Roth IRAs for the 2022 tax year, please contact us as soon as possible to discuss those contributions. We can make contributions to tax-qualified accounts using funds from your non-tax-qualified investments, but a little planning ahead of time helps us ensure that these types of transactions are administratively possible.
- If you are taking IRA distributions and are receiving very large tax returns due to overpayment, please contact us. We can adjust your withholding to ensure that we are not distributing more from your retirement accounts than necessary.
- If you are sitting on a significant amount of cash in the bank (this would be more than 6 months of living expenses), check with your bank about their interest rates. Most savings accounts are not paying much, but money markets and CDs are paying more than they have in a long time. We're happy to talk about your options for maximizing your cash returns.

## Spring Skiing...



Arguably [the best time of year for hitting the slopes](#), spring skiing offers warmer temperatures, more sunlight, and often, a deeper snowpack. [Weekend getaways are still possible](#) well into April for some areas. If it's a spur-of-the-moment daytrip and you're not sure of conditions, [check out this link](#) to see what the various mountains have for snow each day. If you're unsure of [what to wear](#), ditch the swim trunks and opt for light layers you can customize. If you're more of an armchair skier, [here are some options](#) for a little vicarious living and maybe some inspiration for next season. Do you know the [history behind some of the world's greatest ski resorts](#)? And [this Facebook group](#) is great for anyone in the Greater Portland area, particularly with kids who grow out of their gear three times each season. Not only is it a money-saver, it's a great way to clean out your closets, keep gear out of the landfills, and meet others in your area. If you're not in Greater Portland, you can search "ski swap" with the name of your location and chances are good you'll find something near you. Finally, don't forget to [brush up on your ski lingo](#) so you can mortify your kids.



## Summer travel...



Now's about the time you may be wishing you'd been a little more proactive about summer travel plans. If you're browsing the web, and are feeling a little overwhelmed by all the options, consider this [article about using a travel agent](#). Contrary to what you may have thought, using a travel agent may not be more expensive than using an online booking company that bundles things up for you. Travel agents are often compensated by the vendors they book, not by you. The more complicated the travel experience, the better they can help you coordinate things in an efficient and economical manner to maximize your experience and minimize your hassles. Difficulties with online booking companies may involve fine print, and can include not being able to speak with the airline or hotel directly, pricing errors, long wait times on hold when issues arise, and worse. [Even companies like AAA](#) can sit down with you and help you plan the entire trip with an actual human being who, when the hotel loses your reservation, or the car rental company charges you twice for insurance, can intervene on your behalf. Cruises (where things are all bundled up for you and can often include airfare) can be booked with a travel agent who knows the ins and outs of each package and can get you deals that may not be available otherwise. Not everything has been replaced by a computer and it's hard to put a price on someone who will sit on hold for you while you're busy wandering the streets of Paris...



We are all itching for a little spring weather around here, and are looking forward to the sun's return. As they say in Maine, if you don't like the weather, just wait a minute. Wherever the [spring equinox](#) finds you this year, White Pine Wealth Management is honored to help you get there. See you in April!



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