The Outlook: Oct. 24, 2025

The Big Picture

OCM Core Stock List

Overview   Data   Events   Alerts

SYMBOL	NAME	LATEST	$ CHG	% CHG
MU	Micron Technology, Inc.	219.41	12.70	6.14%
NVDA	NVIDIA Corp.	186.16	4.00	2.20%
CMI	Cummins, Inc.	422.19	4.45	1.07%
^DJI	Dow Jones Industrial Average	47,207.12	472.51	1.01%
^SPX	S&P 500	6,791.69	53.25	0.79%
MSFT	Microsoft Corp.	523.64	3.08	0.59%
CAT	Caterpillar, Inc.	523.13	2.63	0.51%
FCX	Freeport-McMoRan, Inc.	41.39	0.16	0.39%
XOM	Exxon Mobil Corp.	115.54	-0.44	-0.38%
LMT	Lockheed Martin Corp.	485.41	-2.64	-0.54%
TXN	Texas Instruments Incorporated	169.33	-2.86	-1.66%

That's a cheerful picture on a Friday afternoon. Let's try to sum up "The Big Picture" these days, in the investment world.

The Bright Parts

- **Main Street USA's embrace of Artificial Intelligence is making history.**

We can think many good things and bad things about this. The bottom line, though, is pretty simple: Artificial Intelligence will certainly change the world, mostly for the better . . . and it'll absolutely make Main Street more profitable in the long run. *But we're all guessing about how soon the good things will happen, and how strongly good they'll be*. We don't know the answers to those questions. We'll just have to live through the upcoming years and find out.

That's how it's always been with mankind's big inventions. It's always been: "This will change the world!"   "Hmm, not so fast!" "Look, it really has changed the world!" and so on over the years.

- **The leaders of Main Street's biggest, strongest companies are doing exactly what they're paid to do: take big chances, spend big money . . . mostly, *decide and act!***

Yep, they're being cowboy capitalists. As the future unfolds, they'll take their lumps now and then. ("How could you have spent so much money so fast! Weren't you just caught up in the craze? We need more payoff!", etc.) But history will show they were mostly right, and the whole of Main Street will benefit, as it always does, because men and women sitting at desks where the buck stops ***decided and acted***, instead of dithering and referring the matter to committees.

- **Main Street USA is immensely strong, financially.**

Strong enough to sneer at danger? Nope, that's never true. Every company and consumer on Main Street lives with the endless risk that one day they'll round a corner to find a grizzly bear pouncing on them. But for the last 60 years and more, Main Street's fought off the grizzlies every single time, patched up its wounds, and resumed marching on, stronger than before. It is mighty reassuring, today, to reflect on a basic truth: *the more financial strength, the shorter the grizzly fight and the milder the bleeding wounds.*

The Darker Parts

- **Hostile China is big and strong enough to hurt Main Street World if it chooses to act stupidly . . . which it is capable of doing.**

China is one of those grizzly bears. It's been wandering around Main Street, snarling and frightening people, but never quite pouncing on them with the idea of gobbling them up. On the plus side, Main Street World has its eyes wider open than ever, when it comes to China: much less wishful thinking, these days. That helps a good deal . . . but doesn't eliminate the risk that Mr. Xi will "act stupidly," someday.

- **Debt.**

"Too much debt" has been a dark corner in every Big Picture in history, pretty much. But in today's Big Picture, "debt" is more of a bobcat than a grizzly. Why? Because the alarming debt is not on Main Street, today, but in Government. And despite the nearly-constant headlines about trillions, quadrillions and fantasticatillions of government debt . . . by and large it's still bobcat-sized, when it comes to hurting us, not grizzly-sized. Government can always money-print its way out of a debt problem. Main Street can't. Of course there are inflation consequences, when Government does that, but they're gradual consequences rather than grizzly-pouncing consequences.

The bobcat is growing, though. One day it'll be a mountain lion, and we'll have to do something.

- **Wall Street Silliness.**

Pure silliness is always hanging around somewhere, on Wall Street. Once in a great while (as in 2000's Dotcom Days) the silliness runs wild, so that it's hard to find the cold-hearted, calculating gamblers who usually dominate the Street. We may not think much of them, but they're a lot safer than the silly crowd. As Outlook's noted once or twice lately, a company and stock like Micron has risen 260% in a few months because of the cold-hearted calculators, not the silly crowd. And there are lots of Microns around.

The silly crowd is having its fun, though. Energy analyst Robert Bryce, paying attention to the nuclear power business lately, noted that Wall Street has decided that a sizeable handful of "Small (Nuclear) Modular Reactor" stocks should be awarded the "beanstalk growing to the sky" treatment, valued at $10 billion to $18 billion despite having, ahem, zero revenue and zero working products. But nuclear power is all the rage these days, and the Street's silly crowd loves *anything* which is "all the rage."

That's the Big Picture: the important parts of it. It is <u>not</u> a picture missing the roller coaster: the one which has been giving us a thrill lately, and will make us sick someday . . . as always. But it most emphatically is a picture of the same roller coaster it's always been: one which tilts <u>up</u>, over the years, not down.

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