



## **Our Own Worst Enemy August 2025 Update**

Last June, I published a note called “All-Time Highs? Look Out Below!” The title was tongue-in-cheek, but the message wasn’t: don’t let the noise of headlines or elections derail a sound investment plan.

Since then, markets have done what they frequently do - take investors on a ride. Stocks drifted lower into late 2024, then dropped sharply in April 2025 after early tariff proposals unsettled the market. And then, as usual, the panic passed, and markets rebounded—reaching new highs this summer (*please see updated CEA deck attached for performance figures*).

At Sandhill, we took advantage of that drop. You may have noticed some new names in your portfolio—companies we’ve long admired and finally bought at a discount. New positions include Arista Networks (ANET) and Guidewire (GWRE). We also added to our position in Amphenol (APH). These volatile moments are when our active investment approach earns its keep.

So once again: ignore the doomsayers. Their predictions will be right eventually, but never for long. The key isn’t avoiding risk—it’s having a plan that works despite risk.

### **“A Goal Without a Plan Is Just a Wish” – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry**

Let’s take a step back. Behind every financial plan is a real person—with real habits, emotions, and behaviors that can quietly sabotage good decisions. We can become our own worst enemy.

The most common challenging financial behavior I see is **inaction**. We hesitate. We become paralyzed by analysis. We try to avoid regret by doing nothing at all. It’s understandable—but it can be costly.

This applies to every major life decision: careers, relationships, retirement, and yes, investing.

So how do you break through inaction?

- Get information.
- Ask questions.

- Talk to someone you trust.
- Make a plan.

That's how we move forward—one clear step at a time.

Even small tactics can help. Holding extra cash? Fine—if it helps you stay invested elsewhere. Dollar-cost averaging? Great—if it keeps you from sitting out. *The method doesn't need to be perfect. It just needs to work for you.*

Confidence, not perfection, is what gets you through the noise. Whether it comes from experience, a trusted advisor, or both—once you have it, you can stick with your plan. And that's what matters!

### **Looking Forward**

We've been closely monitoring your portfolios and the broader environment. Our team remains focused and ready to act when the right opportunities arise—just like we did this past April.

What's on our radar right now:

- Monitoring US Q2 earnings, so far robust
- Possible changes to Fed rates
- A cooling labor market
- The ripple effects of tariff developments

We'll never let headlines dictate our investment philosophy, but we do consider the macro backdrop when evaluating risk. We remain nimble, active, and patient, always keeping the security of your assets at the forefront.

### **Upcoming Event**

Please mark your calendars, and join us on Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 5:00-7:00pm for a happy hour at Giancarlos Sicilian Steakhouse in Amherst. We'll all be there, including our research team, to chat informally about our process and philosophy. Please see detailed invitation at the bottom.

### **On a personal note -**

One of the things I love most about this work is how deeply personal it can be. No two clients are the same—and that's especially true when it comes to families with special needs.

Recently, I've been doing a deep dive into planning in this area, and I'm currently working toward a new designation: the ChSNC® (Chartered Special Needs Consultant). I expect to finish it this fall. It's already helping me serve clients more thoughtfully—and I'm grateful for the opportunity to keep learning.

If you or someone you care about could benefit from planning in this area, please feel free to reach out. I'd be happy to help.

Sincerely,  
John  
c: 716-225-8998

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