



# Infinity & Beyond

"Build it Safely....To Last"

JULY 2017

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## Erik's Corner

There's No Place Like Home!

Imagine you are lost. Nothing around you is familiar or friendly. Fear rushes through your heart. You are cold, parched and starving but you can't trust anything or anyone. Your feet are raw from constantly running, looking for home.

Now imagine that you are suddenly scooped up and rescued by loving arms and carried to a warm and comfortable place with refreshing water, food and hope!

Every day and night in East Texas, hundreds of homeless dogs and cats live this ongoing nightmare. Many are dumped by their heartless owners who rush away, leaving their family members alone and hopeless. Many are hit by cars or die of disease or starvation with no one to comfort them.

The SPCA of East Texas rescues a thousand of these homeless animals each year to provide them with food, water, shelter and love, and eventually a forever home. Each year this organization provides adoptions for over 600 animals, and fosters hundreds more. They also provide spay/neuter services for over 5,000 animals, preventing suffering of thousands of more unwanted animals, and they provide wellness treatment for many more.

As the 2017 chairman of this organization, I admire the heroes and heroines saving animals everyday by selflessly crawling under abandoned houses, climbing up trees and through thickets to coax desperate animals, who have no reason to trust them, to safety. This organization consists of people who foster animals while the adoption process eventually plays out, and those who give their time, talent, money and supplies to help this great cause. My wife, Connie, inspired me to become involved in the SPCA by her vast love for the animals who cannot speak for themselves.

Connie and I adopted Venus, Sophie and Hazel and have fostered other animals. We believe they have given us way more than we could ever give to them. They bring joy and love to our family and I shudder to think of their fate without a home to share where they belong and feel safe.

Venus, a beautiful purebred Doberman, was left at a shelter by her owner and she still has detachment worries every time I leave the house. She is loyal, intelligent, athletic, protective and a little neurotic, especially about playing ball.

Sophie, a mix-breed poodle, had a broken leg, laid starving and pregnant in a ditch. She was rescued by the SPCA and nurtured in our home back to health. Her puppies were adopted through the SPCA. Every morning Sophie celebrates a new day as if she has won the lottery all over again, barking and dancing around and running full speed with her permanent limp. There is something knowing in her eyes, the eyes of an old soul.

Hazel smelled of skunk, pads worn, with a worried look in her eyes. I saw her trotting across a field with her tail between her legs. I called out to her, and to her credit, she had just enough hope and trust to slither up to me. I scooped her up and took her home. Now she acts as if she owns the place and hoards food and bones (including Venus' and Sophie's) as if she can never have enough in her savings.

All three of these precious animals were rescued, treated, vaccinated, microchipped and spayed, by loving volunteers who have a big heart for animals.

The SPCA of East Texas needs more volunteer foster homes to provide homeless animals enough time to become adopted. A foster home can provide a safe place for an animal to recover and make the difference between life and death.

If you foster an animal and let them go to an adoption home, despite becoming attached to them, you are making space in your home to save another one who may die without you. If you have it in your heart to help animals please call the SPCA of East Texas or donate today.

<http://spcaeasttx.com>



Venus on guard



Sophie's joy



Hazel being rescued

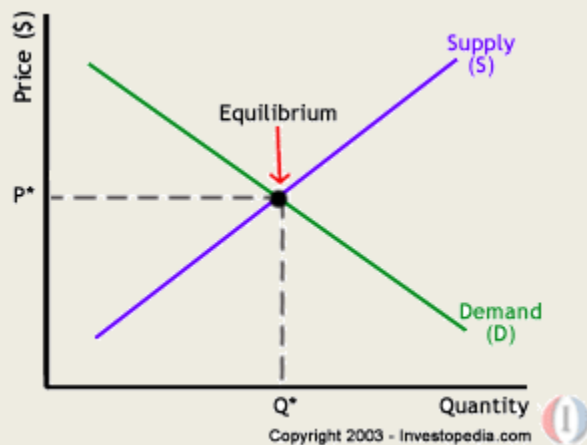


Connie & Petey

Erik Fleming  
*President, Founder*

## Jake's Take

### ***Oil Prices – A Proverbial “Moving Target”***



Consecutive years of “low” oil prices have led to widespread speculation concerning how long it might take oil to rebound, and to what extent. At the end of 2016, following an upward trend and the election of a U.S. president who supports traditional forms of energy, most experts predicted an increase in oil prices in the following year. While this is still possible, prices for the first two quarters of 2017 remain low.

Other experts predicted the downturn to last beyond 2017. Amidst all the varying speculation, one fact seems to ring true more than any other – *no one can know for sure what the future of oil holds.*

Like with weather forecasting or sports betting, sophisticated computer modeling, historical data, and expert opinions can't and won't yield a certain outcome. And if commodity speculation was always right, investors would never lose a dime in the stock market.

So, what makes the price of oil so volatile and its behavior so hard to predict?

The price of oil is related to many uncertain factors. Like with math, variables affect outcome. The more variables you interject, the more difficult it is to predict the outcome. I'm no economist, but from my studies and readings, there are a plethora of factors (variables) which influence oil prices. Of these factors, there are 5 which are especially influential in today's market: **Supply, Demand, Oil Futures, OPEC and Geopolitics (including production and export limitation agreements).**

The following articles contain information related to each of these factors. Through reading articles like these, we can gain a better understanding of the behavior of oil pricing and why it is truly a proverbial “moving target”.

The opinions expressed in the piece above are my own and not necessarily those of Infinity Project Management. The content herein after is intended to be used for informational purposes only and should not be construed as a recommendation to invest, trade, and/or speculate in the markets.

Jake Robertson

*VP, Manager of Business & HR*

## ***What Determines Oil Prices?***

By Paul Kosakowski | Updated July 5, 2016 — 2:38 PM EDT

With each passing year, oil seems to play an even greater role in the global economy. In the early days, finding oil during a drill was considered somewhat of a nuisance as the intended treasures were normally water or salt. It wasn't until 1857 that the first commercial oil well was drilled in Romania. The U.S. petroleum industry was born two years later with an intentional drilling in Titusville, Pa.

While much of the early demand for oil was for kerosene and oil lamps, it wasn't until 1901 that the first commercial well capable of mass production was drilled at a site known as Spindletop in southeastern Texas. This site produced more than 10,000 barrels of oil per day, more than all the other oil-producing wells in the U.S. combined. Many would argue that the modern oil era was born that day in 1901, as oil was soon to replace coal as the world's primary fuel source. Oil's use in fuels continues to be the primary factor in making it a high-demand commodity around the globe, but how are prices determined?

### **The Determinants of Oil Prices**

With oil's stature as a high-demand global commodity comes the possibility that major fluctuations in price can have a significant economic impact. The two primary factors that impact the price of oil are:

- supply and demand
- market sentiment

The concept of supply and demand is fairly straightforward. As demand increases (or supply decreases) the price should go up. As demand decreases (or supply increases) the price should go down. Sound simple?

Not quite. The price of oil as we know it is actually set in the oil futures market. An oil futures contract is a binding agreement that gives one the right to purchase oil by the barrel at a predefined price on a predefined date in the future. Under a futures contract, both the buyer and the seller are obligated to fulfill their side of the transaction on the specified date.

The following are two types of futures traders:

- hedgers

- speculators

An example of a hedger would be an airline buying oil futures to guard against potential rising prices. An example of a speculator would be someone who is just guessing the price direction and has no intention of actually buying the product. According to the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME), the majority of futures trading is done by speculators as less than 3% of transactions actually result in the purchaser of a futures contract taking possession of the commodity being traded. The other key factor in determining oil prices is sentiment. The mere belief that oil demand will increase dramatically at some point in the future can result in a dramatic increase in oil prices in the present as speculators and hedgers alike snap up oil futures contracts. Of course, the opposite is also true. The mere belief that oil demand will decrease at some point in the future can result in a dramatic decrease in prices in the present as oil futures contracts are sold (possibly sold short as well).

### **Price Cycle**

Additionally, from a historical perspective, there appears to be a possible 29-year (plus or minus one or two years) cycle that governs the behavior of commodity prices in general. Since the beginning of oil's rise as a high-demand commodity in the early 1900s, major peaks in the commodities index have occurred in 1920, 1951 and 1980. Oil peaked with the commodities index in both 1920 and 1980. (Note: there was no real peak in oil in 1951 because it had been moving in a sideways trend since 1948 and continued to do so through 1968.) It is important to note that supply, demand and sentiment take precedence over cycles because cycles are just guidelines, not rules.

### **Conclusion**

Unlike most products, oil prices are not determined entirely by supply, demand and market sentiment toward the physical product. Rather, supply, demand and sentiment toward oil futures contracts, which are traded heavily by speculators, play a dominant role in price determination. Cyclical trends in the commodities market may also play a role. Regardless of how the price is ultimately determined, based on its use in fuels and countless consumer goods, it appears that oil will continue to be in high demand for the foreseeable future.

## ***Oil Prices: What to Make of the Volatility***

By **CLIFFORD KRAUSS** **UPDATED** June 14, 2017

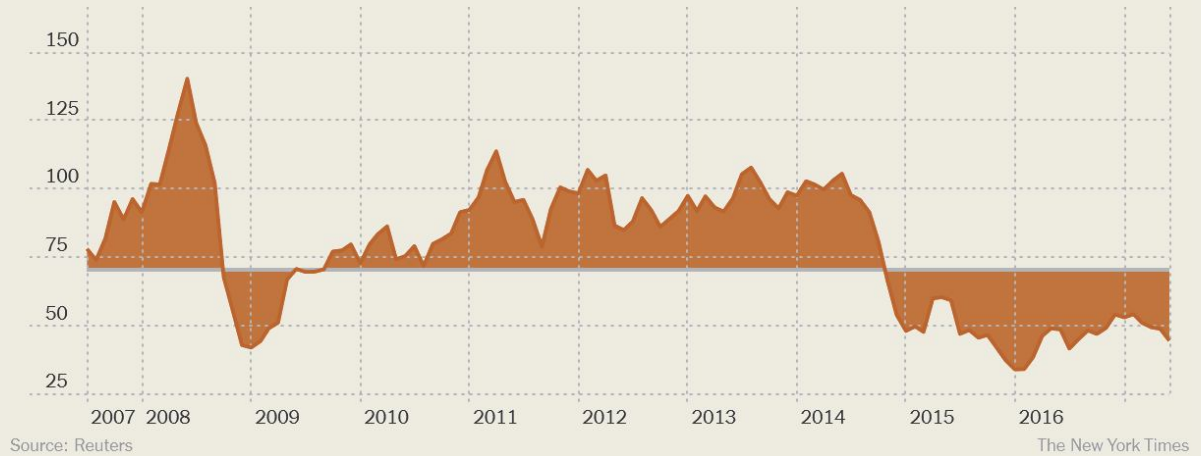
Over the last two and a half years, the oil industry has experienced its deepest downturn since at least the 1990s. If history is any guide, after every oil bust comes a recovery, if not a boom. But this time a recovery has been tentative, at best.

### **What is the current price of oil?**

Brent crude oil, the main international benchmark, was trading at about **\$47** a barrel on Tuesday, June 14, 2017.

The American benchmark was about **\$44** a barrel.

3:19 PM ET 06/27/2017



### **What is the outlook for prices?**

Executives say they think it will be years before oil returns to \$90 or \$100 a barrel, which was pretty much the norm until the price collapse in late 2014.

But after the oil price recovered from below \$30 in early 2016 to over \$50 by the end of the year, there was rising confidence in the industry that crude could rise to \$60 a barrel or even higher later this year. That confidence was shaken by a price dip in early March, but most experts say they think oil and gasoline prices will recover during the heavy driving season in the summer.

Nonetheless, the oil markets could be poised for another wild ride, with Wall Street and academic analysts predicting a price of anywhere between \$40 and \$70 by the end of the year. Wide swings are possible, if not probable. Political and economic upheaval in a major oil-producing country like Venezuela could cause a price spike.

## **Who benefits from a rise in prices?**

First and foremost, oil companies, their employees and shareholders are winners as oil and gasoline prices rise. Producing states like Alaska, Louisiana, North Dakota, Oklahoma and Texas also benefit because employment and tax revenues rise.

Higher prices also mean more activity in the oil fields, which helps local businesses such as mom-and-pop services companies, construction firms that build housing, and truck dealerships.

And, of course, producing countries benefit, like Nigeria, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela – all of which have been pressed financially in recent years. For the Saudis, there is an additional advantage: Higher oil prices make its state oil company, Saudi Aramco, more valuable for the initial public offering it has planned for later this year.

There is also a potential benefit for the environment. Higher oil and gasoline prices encourage consumers to buy smaller vehicles and limit driving.

## **Who loses from rising prices?**

Consumers of gasoline, diesel fuel and heating oil are losers, and those with lower incomes in the United States and abroad are affected disproportionately because fuel costs eat up a larger share of their earnings.

Restaurants, hotels and retail outlets can be hurt when consumers have less to spend.

But current oil and gasoline prices are roughly in balance, representing good economic news over all. They are high enough to help struggling states and countries, but not so high as to cause inordinate pain to consumers. Oil prices remain half what they were in the middle of 2014. Nevertheless, a price shock – either up or down – could come at any time.

## **How much power does OPEC have to dictate prices?**

We may soon find out. OPEC members produce nearly 40 percent of the global oil supply, so the group can be a force when united.

Saudi Arabia, the cartel's leader, reversed course late last year. After following a policy of record-breaking production to build and protect markets, especially in Asia, and to undercut competitors producing from shale and oil-sand deposits, the Saudis bent under the pressure of low oil prices.

In November, the cartel agreed to limit production for six months starting in 2017. Saudi Arabia alone agreed to cut production by roughly 486,000 barrels a day, or about 5 percent of its output. The cartel's total cut has amounted to as much as 1.2 million barrels a day.

Weeks later, Russia and other oil-producing nations also agreed to lower their output, a rare sign of international cooperation that indicates exporters' worries about continued low prices. That means an additional reduction of more than 550,000 barrels a day.

OPEC then announced in May that it would cut oil production for longer than planned, agreeing to lower production levels through March 2018. Russia has said it will do the same.



Several OPEC members that have undermined past accords, particularly Venezuela, are in no position to increase production significantly, making the new agreement more solid.

### **What impact is the Trump administration likely to have?**

Oil industry executives are generally overjoyed by Donald J. Trump's election as president. He supports industry efforts to build more pipelines, including the Keystone XL, which would deliver Canadian heavy oil to Gulf of Mexico refineries, and to open up more federal lands and deepwater prospects for drilling. He also says he would like to lower regulatory burdens on the industry and has expressed little sympathy for the international Paris climate accord, which aimed to lower global dependence on fossil fuels.

All of those policies, if enacted, would increase oil and natural gas supplies on domestic and international markets – potentially lowering prices.

On the other hand, any move by Mr. Trump to reinstitute sanctions lifted in the multilateral nuclear accord with Tehran could constrict Iranian exports. Since Iran has once again become a major exporter, that could mean hundreds of thousands of fewer barrels a day on the world market, lifting prices.

### **Employees of the Month**

Congratulations to the employee of the month award recipients! Thank you for all of your hard work:

April 2017 – Ron King  
May 2017 – Michael Roseberry  
June 2017 – Greg Brown

### **IPM Service Awards**

Congratulations to the employees who have earned their service awards! We appreciate everything that you do for this company:

May 28, 2017 – Wesley Stowe – 3 Years  
July 16, 2017 – Edwin Barnes – 5 Years  
July 16, 2017 – Miles Freeman – 5 Years

### **New Project Awards**

WESTLAKE - Provide Secondary Power Source – Detailed Engineering

DELEK - FCC Fractionator-Pump Monorail

DELEK - Alky Replace Isobutane Pumps

DELEK - Main BFW Pump Study

WESTLAKE - Replace C-336 Air Compressor – Detailed Engineering

## IPM Employee Profiles

### Michael Roseberry, CCE and Steve Wood, PE

It is our pleasure to introduce Michael Roseberry, IPM's new Project Controls Manager. Michael has a Bachelor's of Science in Industrial Engineering Technology and is a Certified Cost Engineer. He has been trained in management development, lean manufacturing, Six Sigma Black Belt, SAP R2/R3, JDE Accounting Systems, AutoCAD, and Primavera. Michael spent 18 years with Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company where he served as Industrial Engineering Manager, responsible for time and motion studies, methods improvements, and capital budget justifications. Michael spent the last decade working as a Senior Project Controls Specialist with CB&I and was responsible for all cost, progress and schedule engineering responsibilities on multimillion dollar engineering, procurement, fabrication and construction projects. Michael also has a Private Pilot's License which he obtained in 1998. He resides in Chandler with his wife and daughter. We are happy to have Michael on board!



Michael Roseberry



Steve Wood

It is also our pleasure to introduce Project/Civil Engineer, Steve Wood. Steve is a graduate of Purdue University (BSCE with structural emphasis) and has spent the last 19 years with CBI in Tyler, Plainfield (IL) and Lima (OH). Steve is a Professional Engineer in Texas, Illinois and Canada and is currently pursuing licensing other states. Steve has extensive experience with domestic and international facilities for chemicals, fuel gas treating, sulfur recovery, and LNG processing/storage. Work items have included pressure vessel design and drafting, site erection of pressure vessels and flat bottom tanks, access and support structures (both modular and field-erected), foundation design for structures and equipment, area and road paving, storm water management systems, full prestressed concrete containment tanks, elevated pile caps, soil improvement methods, drainage design, site runoff analysis and underground utility planning. Steve resides in Whitehouse with his wife and twin sons. We are happy to have Steve onboard!

## IPM Calendar of Events

July 22, 2017 – Noon – IPM 10 Year Anniversary BBQ – IPM Home Office – Tyler, TX

## IPM Events



Angie & Catherine – Delek Tournament for Hope – El Dorado, AR – June 14 – 15, 2017



Catherine, Angie, Clay, & Danny - Delek Tournament for Hope – El Dorado, AR – June 14 – 15, 2017

## Safety Moment

### **Sun Safety Tips**

It's natural to enjoy all kinds of outdoor activities! The Sun Safety Alliance (SSA) encourages you to be safe by following these sun-safety tips year-round to help prevent serious skin damage—**and possibly skin cancer**—later!

- Keep in mind the sun is strongest between 10 am and 4 pm.
- Wear clothing that's dark and tightly woven.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses.

- Remember that UV rays bounce off sand, snow, concrete, and water.
- Do not use sun tanning beds.
- Keep very young children (6 months or less) out of the sun.
- Sunscreens need to be applied liberally and evenly over all exposed areas.
- Apply a sunscreen with a SPF of 15 or higher whenever you're outdoors. To achieve adequate UV protection, you should use products that provide broad spectrum protection, which means protection against both UVB and UVA rays. For broad spectrum protection, look for products that provide an SPF of at least 15 and contain ingredients like Avobenzone (Parsol 1789) or zinc oxide.
- For children, the SSA recommends sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher.
- Apply sunscreen before going outdoors and reapply often.
- Reapply sunscreen after swimming, perspiring, and toweling off.
- Provide complete sunscreen coverage for your skin (including neck, ears and lips!).
- For people with thin or thinning hair, apply sunscreen to the scalp as well.
- And remember stay in the shade whenever possible!