Factoids for the week of May 1, 2017

Monday, May 1, 2017
In April, the dividend-payers (417) in the S&P 500 Index (equal weight) posted a total return of 0.9%, vs. 1.33% for the non-payers (88), according to S&P Dow Jones Indices. There are currently 505 stocks in the index. Year-to-date, the payers were up 5.61%, vs. a gain of 7.83% for the non-payers. For the 12-month period ended April 2017, payers were up 14.66%, vs. a gain of 14.98% for the non-payers. The number of dividend increases in April totaled 27 down from 35 a year ago. Year-to-date, increases totaled 141, down from 149 over the same period a year ago. No dividends were decreased in April, as was the case a year ago.

Tuesday, May 2, 2017
A recent survey of 2,300 senior corporate executives from EY revealed that 74% of U.S. executives plan to pursue a mergers and acquisitions (M&A) deal in the next 12 months, surpassing the survey's average of 47% since its inception eight years ago, according to Yahoo Finance. Of those polled, 54% believe the Trump administration's policies have the potential to create more M&A opportunities, particularly its proposed changes to the corporate tax code.

Wednesday, May 3, 2017
Worldwide sales of semiconductors totaled $30.9 billion in March, up 17.9% from the $26.2 billion sold in March 2016 and up 1.6% from the $30.4 billion sold in February 2017, according to the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA). In Q1'17, global sales totaled $92.6 billion, up 18.1% from Q1'16's tally. This year's 18.0% sales growth pace is the strongest since October 2010. On a year-over-year basis, the percent change in region/country semiconductor sales were as follows: China (+26.7%); the Americas (+21.9%); Asia Pacific/All Other (+11.9%); Europe (+11.1%); and Japan (+10.7%). Year-to-date through 5/2/17, the Philadelphia Semiconductor Index posted a total return of 11.33%, compared to 16.74% for the S&P 500 Information Technology Index and 7.47% for the S&P 500 Index, according to Bloomberg.

Thursday, May 4, 2017
The Trump administration's tax reform plan includes a provision allowing for the repatriation of cash held by U.S. companies overseas at a reduced tax rate (one-time tax), according to Business Insider. The last time this was done was in 2004. After the American Jobs Creation Act was passed, U.S. companies returned $362 billion, or 45% of their foreign cash holdings, according to Pavilion Global Markets. Of that amount, $312 billion was eligible to be taxed at a 5.25% rate instead of the usual 35% corporate rate. S&P Global Ratings noted that it believed the Trump administration's policies have the potential to create more M&A opportunities, particularly its proposed changes to the corporate tax code.