Maine Stock Index, Week of February 26th

The Maine Stock Index closed with a small increase for the week ended February 26th of 1.45 points or 1.47%, to 99.91. Of the stocks in the Index, 75 percent were up this week, with five stocks having an increase above 4%. The Index is finally where it was around the week ended September 18, 2015. After the large drop we witnessed with the start of the new year, Maine companies are finally on an upswing. Big changers this week include **Unum Group (UNM)** which was up 5.09% or $1.40 a share, to $28.92 this week. **Valero Energy (VLO)** wasup 4.57% or $2.61 a share, to $59.66 this week. **Bank of America (BAC)** was up 4.70% or $0.57 a share, to $12.70 this week.

Over the last three months **Unum Group (UNM)** has declined 27.16% and in the past six months the shares have registered a loss of 26.62%. Unum Group has a current dividend yield of 2.94%. According to Yahoo Finance, the company has a stock beta of 1.52, indicating its returns are greatly influenced by fluctuations in the market.

**Valero Energy (VLO) -** The company's strengths can be seen in multiple areas, such as its notable return on equity, reasonable valuation levels and largely solid financial position with reasonable debt levels by most measures.

**Bank of America (BAC) -** Big banks now look to interest rate policy from the Federal Reserve as a potential source of future net income growth. Interest rate increases allow banks to charge higher interest on assets like loans and credit cards and are, generally speaking, bullish for the financial services industry. Bank of America Corporation is the second-largest bank in the United States and the ninth-largest bank in the world by total assets as of June 30, 2015. The traditional banking business continues to perform well, while higher-margin businesses such as wealth management also augment the bank's bottom line.

The Maine Stock Index was developed by Marie Kenney, while a student at Husson University, in consultation with Associate Professor J. Douglas Wellington. The index is currently being tracked and analyzed by Husson student Samuel Thomas. The index tracks and analyzes 28 companies that are considered to have an effect on the Maine economy. These companies are either based in Maine or have an influence on the Maine economy through employment, number of consumers, and overall presence in the State.  This price-weighted index offers a numerical break down of Maine’s economy. The analysis looks into the events of the week and finds the likely reasons the index was up or down. The index and analysis help provide a better understanding of Maine’s economy and offer an explanation of significant changes in the stock prices of the companies that comprise the Maine Stock Index.

**References**

**(BAC) –** Dierking, D. (2016, February 28). Bank of America's 4 Most Profitable Lines of Business (BAC) | Investopedia. Retrieved February 28, 2016, from <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/022816/bank-americas-4-most-profitable-lines-business-bac.asp?partner=YahooSA>

**(UNM) –** Accesswire. (2016, February 17). Technical Insights on Equity Movements - Research Reports on Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Unum, St. Jude Medical and PartnerRe. Retrieved February 28, 2016, from <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/technical-insights-equity-movements-research-135500762.html>

**(VLO) -** Schiavo, A. (2016, February 24). Why Valero Energy (VLO) Stock is Spiking Today. Retrieved February 28, 2016, from <http://www.thestreet.com/story/13470761/1/why-valero-energy-vlo-stock-is-spiking-today.html?puc=yahoo>