

A wave of deportations begins



A talent for annoying people p.10 Lena Dunham



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Since he took power in 2000, President Vladimir Putin has been promising to make Russia great again. By any traditional metric, he has failed. The country has been trapped in recession since oil prices collapsed in 2014 and the West imposed sanctions over Putin's land grab in Ukraine. The president and his oligarchs continue to live the high life in Moscow, but living standards have plummeted for ordinary Russians. Average monthly wages sank 8 percent last year to less than \$450—lower than in China or Romania—while the poverty rate hit nearly 16 percent. Rocketing inflation has caused food prices to double, and 50 percent of Russians now grow vegetables to help feed their family. A quarter of Russian men die before age 55, most because of alcoholism. People "don't have work, nobody needs them, so they drink," one Siberian told The New York Times. "It's a Russian tradition."

And yet Putin's approval rating from the Russian people consistently hovers near 80 percent. That's because he's created a

surge of nationalist pride in the motherland, while relentlessly utilizing international interventions, hacking, and propaganda to show Russians that the democratic West is no better. His bombing campaign in support of the Syrian regime has pushed waves of refugees toward Europe, causing bitter infighting on the Continent about these asylum seekers. Those divisions are being widened by Moscow's clandestine support for far-right, anti-EU parties in France, Greece, Italy, and Hungary. And while Russian meddling in the U.S. election may not have been the decisive factor that won the presidency for Trump, the Kremlin's preferred candidate (See Best Columns: International), it has caused chaos. The intelligence community and the president are now openly feuding, and accusations that the president and his team have mysterious ties to Russia are deepening the nation's partisan chasm (See Main Stories). Inside the Kremlin, **Theunis Bates** Putin must be smiling. Managing editor

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Managing editors: Theunis Bates, Carolyn O'Hara Deputy editor/International: Susan Caskie Deputy editor/Arts: Chris Mitchell

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Trump taps McMaster as national security adviser

What happened

President Trump this week named the widely respected Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster as his new national security adviser, in an effort to steady a foreign policy team roiled by Michael Flynn's ouster for lying about his conversations with Russian officials. A bluntly outspoken military tactician, McMaster, 54, accepted the post after retired Navy Vice Adm. Robert Harward turned it down out of concern that he could not bring in his own team. In a rollout at his Mar-a-Lago estate, Trump praised the new hire as "a man of tremendous talent and tremendous experience." McMaster holds a

doctorate in military history from the University of North Carolina, and became famous within the Army for leading a nine-tank assault that destroyed more than 80 Iraqi tanks and armed vehicles in the 1991 Gulf War. His 1997 book, *Dereliction of Duty*, was a scathing critique of U.S. military leaders who refused to push back against President Lyndon Johnson's disastrous escalation of the Vietnam War. During the Iraq War, McMaster's counterinsurgency efforts secured the key city of Tal Afar and served as a template for Gen. David Petraeus' "surge" of 2007. Known for his humane treatment of detainees, McMaster ordered soldiers never to speak of Muslims in derogatory terms. "I look forward to joining the national security team and doing everything I can to advance and protect the interests of the American people," McMaster said.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer said McMaster has "full authority to structure the national security team the way he wants." The selection won praise from Trump's critics on both sides of the aisle. Republican Sen. John McCain lauded McMaster's "genuine intellect, character, and ability"; Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff, ranking member of the House Intelligence Committee, tweeted that the general "wrote the book on [the] importance of standing up," and "may need to show [the] same independence here."

What the editorials said

McMaster "is an enlightened choice" who could be a "moderating force in an administration packed with radicals and amateurs," said *The New York Times*. The key to his Iraq War success "was simple, yet revolutionary": treating Iraqis "with dignity and deference" and protecting civilians from murderous insurgents. McMaster also



McMaster with Trump: No yes-man

speaks of the terrorist threat "with nuance and restraint, careful not to brand all Muslims a menace"—a welcome contrast to "the hysteria" that fueled Trump's travel ban.

If Trump wanted a yes-man to head the National Security Council, "he has picked the wrong general," said *The Wall Street Journal*. The only question is whether McMaster "can step out of his military background to become a foreign policy strategist." Someone in this White House—hopefully not ultranationalist Stephen Bannon—must devise a strategy for

reclaiming American influence from the encroachment of China, Russia, and Iran in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. "This means turning Mr. Trump's 'America First' instincts into policies that don't merely mimic President Obama's strategic retreat."

What the columnists said

The new NSA chief "is no Michael Flynn, and that's a good thing," said Jennifer Rubin in *The Washington Post*. McMaster won't cozy up to Russia, brand NATO a burden, or "indict the entire Muslim world." His success depends on "quarantining Stephen Bannon," and teaming up with other adults in the administration, like Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and Homeland Security's John Kelly. "That still leaves the problem of Trump's judgment, conflicts of interest, honesty, and impulsivity, but at least the foreign policy apparatus won't be the cause of his failures."

"McMaster is widely viewed as the Army's smartest officer," said Fred Kaplan in *Slate.com*. He becomes NSA chief with the "most rigorous judgment of anyone who's taken the job in decades," and is renowned for speaking truth to power.

McMaster inherits a "National Security Council in deep disarray," said James Kitfield in *Politico.com*. He also enters a White House "with competing power players who have sharp elbows and closer ties to the president," such as Bannon, who actually got himself on the NSC. At some point the forthright McMaster will "tell the president something he doesn't want to hear," said retired Army Maj. Mike Lyons in *TheHill.com*. That's when we'll "find out if the Trump administration confuses moral courage with loyalty."

It wasn't all bad

■ A Tennessee school bus driver went above and beyond for a student on his route. During one morning ride Thomas Mitchell noticed Verna DeSpain struggling to push her wheelchair-bound daughter Lydia, 10, down their makeshift aluminum ramp. Eager to help, Mitchell called the local Lowes for lumber and other supplies, enlisted a few buddies, and quickly built the family a stable new ramp. Now DeSpain gets Lydia off to school with ease every day. "I'm very thankful and grateful," said DeSpain. "This is the best year my children and I have ever had."

■ They call Zhang Hexian "Kung Fu Grandma." A social media sensation in China, the diminutive 93-year-old from the eastern Zhejiang province has been practicing the martial art since age 4. At the time, her country "was at war," Zhang explains, "so it was a good way to learn self-defense." She



Zhang and her students

has since mastered a form of kung fu that encompasses 15 styles, each with 36 moves, and now teaches the skill to others in her village. Zhang, who boasts that she's never been to a hospital, credits kung fu with keeping her healthy. "To have good body," she says, "you need to exercise and keep a positive attitude."

■ When Cathleen Cavin first brought her daughter's kitten, Ozzy, home from a Petaluma, Calif., animal shelter in 2014, she felt quilty about separating the cat from his brother. One day, she promised, she'd reunite the siblings. Two years later, Cavin met Brian Herrera on a dating site. The pair hit it off, she went to his home-and was shocked to find that his cat, Butter, was a dead ringer for Ozzy. A check of shelter records revealed that, indeed, the pets were long-lost brothers. "It's total destiny," says Cavin, who's moving in with Herrera next month. "Yeah, it's fate."

White House prepares new travel ban

What happened

President Trump was set this week to unveil a revised version of his controversial travel ban targeting immigrants from seven Muslimmajority nations, likely with a tighter focus so it can pass muster with the courts. A U.S. District Court judge earlier this month blocked the original travel ban, which temporarily halted all refugee entry to the U.S. and barred citizens from Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. That decision was upheld by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals. Trump, who has promised to implement

"extreme vetting" for immigrants and refugees from terrorist hot spots, called the ruling "ridiculous." His new order is expected to apply to the same seven countries, but with exemptions for green card holders, some visa holders, and those who are already en route to the U.S. when the ban comes into effect. White House adviser Stephen Miller said the new order would achieve "the same policy outcome" as Trump's initial travel ban.

Advocacy groups pledged to challenge the new order in court. "As long as there continues to be a ban," said Lee Gelernt, an attorney with the ACLU, "we will pursue our lawsuits." The Justice Department said the original ban would be rescinded, but White House press secretary Sean Spicer insisted that the administration would continue to fight the order's suspension in court.

What the columnists said

This proposed revamp would do a lot to "judgeproof the ban," said Dara Lind in *Vox.com*. Green card holders enjoy basic



Refugees in Iraq: Barred again?

constitutional and legal protections that other noncitizens lack; exempting them makes the executive order harder to challenge under due process laws. But because of Trump's repeated campaign promises to institute a Muslim ban, some judges who've heard the case so far have concluded that the order was motivated by anti-Muslim animus. That could make it unconstitutionally discriminatory. "A revision of the ban might make it less sloppy, but it wouldn't change that animus."

Trump's past comments are irrelevant, said Eric Posner in *The New York Times*. The Supreme Court has made it clear that if a president has a "facially legitimate" reason to act on immigration—in this case, national security—judges shouldn't "look beyond" that reason. These legal and constitutional questions will almost certainly have to be resolved by the country's highest court, said Ed Kilgore in *NYMag.com*. In the meantime, expect "plenty of legal maneuvering" and "more explosions of rage at the judiciary" from the president.

Whatever Trump does on immigration, it'll prompt angry protests and "endless stories of families detained," said M.G. Oprea in *TheFederalist.com*. But it's worth remembering that the first executive order was in fact supported by a majority of Americans. These people aren't "racist or Islamophobic." They've seen immigrants committing terrorist attacks in Europe, and they want to prevent that from happening here. There are two "legitimate viewpoints" on this issue that "reflect two increasingly different Americas." Each side should at least "try to understand the other."

A new revelation about Trump team's Russian outreach

What happened

Scrutiny of President Trump's ties to Russia took a surprising new turn this week, when *The New York Times* reported that the president's personal lawyer and a former business associate secretly concocted and delivered to the White House a peace plan for Ukraine that would give Russia long-term control over Crimea and lift U.S. sanctions on Moscow. The proposal was drafted by Trump's personal attorney, Michael Cohen, along with businessman Felix Sater and a pro-Moscow Ukrainian lawmaker. It was handed to then–national security adviser Michael Flynn in February. Flynn later resigned over a phone call he made to Russia's ambassador to the U.S. in December, on the same day the Obama administration imposed new sanctions on Moscow for intervening in the 2016 presidential election.

FBI Director James Comey met with the Senate Intelligence Committee behind closed doors last week to discuss Russian interference in the election. The FBI is now pursuing three separate investigations into the matter—including a probe into financial transactions by Russians believed to have links to Trump associates. Trump's chief of staff, Reince Priebus, said reports of Kremlin-Trump connections were "total baloney." House and Senate Democrats called for an independent special prosecutor, saying Trump's Justice Department can't be trusted.

What the columnists said

"Trump can't seem to shake those Russia problems," said Timothy O'Brien in *Bloomberg.com*. As if Flynn's resignation

and the FBI investigations into the Kremlin weren't toxic enough, amateur Trump-linked diplomats have now been caught trying to forge a peace deal that rewards Putin for seizing Crimea. One would-be peacemaker is mob-connected businessman Sater, who helped the Trump Organization scout deals in Russia. Yet congressional Republicans refuse to hear the alarm bells, said Michael Cohen in *The Boston Globe*. "The same group that spent years investigating Benghazi seems utterly indifferent to what is an exponentially greater national security crisis."

Let's call off the "Cold War hysteria," said Katrina vanden Heuvel in *WashingtonPost.com*. There's no evidence that Trump is plotting with Russian President Vladimir Putin. True, Flynn was caught speaking with the Russians about sanctions before Trump took office. But "to suggest better relations are in the offing with a new president" is hardly treason. And if Trump does pursue a closer relationship with Putin over issues like ISIS, so what? He's only doing what he promised during the campaign.

Still, a huge question remains, said John Cassidy in *NewYorker .com*: "What lies at the bottom of Trump's Putinophilia?" The benign answer is that Trump thinks working with Putin serves U.S. interests—though most foreign policy experts would disagree. A darker explanation is that Trump "sees the authoritarian Putin as a role model." The third theory is the most worrying: that "the Russian government has some kind of hold over Trump." As long as this question remains unanswered, "the only way to clear things up is to hold a proper independent investigation."

Controversy of the week

The press: Are journalists 'the enemy of the people'?

The adversarial relationship between the press and the president is "as old as the republic itself," said Jon Finer in The Atlantic.com. But President Trump's constant attacks on "the press as an institution," which escalated sharply last week, are "something new and potentially dangerous" for our democracy. At a wildly combative White House press conference, Trump loudly berated reporters as "dishonest" peddlers of "fake news," and said the press "is out of control." Perhaps most chilling, though, was a tweet in which the president labeled the mainstream media "the enemy of the American people!" This snappy phrase has an ugly history, said Will Bunch in the Philadelphia Daily News. Hitler, Mao, and Lenin all used "enemies of the people" to discredit and incite violence against anyone who dared

to question their authority. As Republican Sen. John McCain put it this week, attacking the legitimacy of the free press is "how dictators get started."

Let's not overreact, said Jack Shafer in *Politico.com*. "There is no more consistent political tradition in America than presidents delegitimizing the press." FDR once gave a reporter a dunce's hat and told him to sit in the corner. President John Adams signed the Alien and Sedition Acts, which made false criticism of his government a crime. President Trump is simply putting the press on notice, said Michael Goodwin in *NYPost.com*. He is calling out biased reporters for "trying to destroy his presidency," and is making it clear that if "journalists behave like opponents, he will treat them like opponents, punching back harder than they punch him."

Sorry, but Trump's attack on the press is both unprecedented and

"ominous," said James Fallows in *TheAtlantic.com*. Other presidents have complained about *how* they've been covered by the media; Trump is essentially claiming the media has no right to ask him questions he'd rather not answer, or to write stories he deems negative and unfair. In his black-and-white way, he actually thinks the entire media

News, which Trump called "very honorable." His goals are more sinister even than that, said Bret Stephens in *Time*. When the press catches him in one of his many lies, such as his claim that millions of people illegally voted in the election, Trump always responds, Well, that's what "many people say." This is an Orwellian attack on not just the media but also the idea of "objectivity itself." Trump wants to be president of a nation where "there is no such thing as truth."

should turn into a propaganda organ like Fox

If so, his plan isn't working, said Lloyd Grove in *TheDailyBeast .com*. The departure last week of national security adviser Michael Flynn was the direct result of aggressive reporting by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, which have only just begun to dig into the tangle of secrets, chaos, and corruption in the White House. If anything, "journalism as an institution has reasserted itself" in the Age of Trump. It badly needs to, said Linda Feldmann in *CSMonitor.com*. Even though major newspapers and websites report that circulation and traffic are surging because of interest in Trump, polls find that trust in the media is still "at an all-time low." How journalists respond to Trump's open hostility and to his norm-shattering approach to governing will go a long way toward determining how the public sees the press: Is it "a biased meddler, or an essential pillar of American democracy"?

Only in America

- An interracial couple in Connecticut is being fined \$100 a day for failing to remove a racist slur that vandals painted on their garage. Stamford police say the large, visible N-word is "disturbing the peace," but Heather Lindsay and Lexene Charles are refusing to have it removed until "authorities do their job" and find the culprits, and "not just cover it up as they have done in the past." The fines total more than \$3,600 so far.
- A fake-news site is giving progressives a chance to visit an alternative reality in which Hillary Clinton won the election. HillaryBeatTrump.org features headlines such as "Confused by fake news, Redditers think Trump is President," and "Approval ratings for President Clinton hit 89%." The site promises to deliver "news from real America," where the "majority rules."

Good week for:

Rest and relaxation, after President Trump, who repeatedly lambasted Barack Obama for playing golf while president, played six rounds of golf in Florida during his first month in office. His staff taped up a window with black plastic to prevent reporters from seeing Trump on the course.

Borrowing a phrase with a rich history

Rave reviews, after a modest roadside café in central France was inundated with new customers after mistakenly being awarded a coveted Michelin star intended for an expensive restaurant of the same name. "I put my heart into my cooking," said the delighted chef of the "wrong" Le Bouche à Oreille.

Ivanka Trump, whose signature perfume became the top-selling fragrance on Amazon.com, as Trump supporters responded to a boycott of her products by Trump critics.

Bad week for:

Oversharing, after a California woman donated her husband's old shirt to a local Goodwill only to discover that he'd hidden \$8,000 he'd been saving for a surprise vacation in the pocket. "He was crying," Linda Hoffman said of her husband's reaction. Fortunately, a Goodwill employee returned the cash.

Authors, with the news that publishers are hiring "sensitivity readers" to screen books for content about race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation someone might find offensive.

Skipping the chores, after a Pennsylvania college student received a package from his mother filled with garbage he had neglected to take out during a home visit. Connor Cox said his mom knows "what to say at the exact time she should say it."

Trump to revoke transgender protections

The Trump administration was preparing this week to roll back Obama-era protections for transgender students, according to a draft letter seen by The Washington Post. In the letter, administration officials say they are withdrawing an Obama administration directive that requires the nation's public schools to let children use bathrooms and locker rooms that match their gender identities-a right protected under federal Title IX rules, according to the directive. "This interpretation has given rise to significant litigation," states the letter. White House press secretary Sean Spicer added that President Trump believes transgender protections are "a states' rights issue." Education Secretary Betsy DeVos opposed the letter, said the Post, but was overruled by Attorney General Jeff Sessions.

The U.S. at a glance...

Iowa Falls, Iowa

Rowdy town halls: Heading back to their



Grassley: Rough reception

home districts for the Presidents' Day recess, Republican lawmakers were greeted this week by

raucous crowds at a series of heated town hall events, as angry constituents voiced their displeasure at the GOP's policy agenda. While up to 200 congressional Republicans skipped the traditional recess events, others chose to face hostile audiences, including Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa, who was berated for the GOP's bid to repeal Obamacare. At one point, a pig farmer handed Grassley a bottle of Tums, telling the senator, "You're going to need them in the next few years." In Kentucky, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was met by hundreds of protesters, while in upstate New York, Rep. Tom Reed faced shouts of "Russia. Russia, Russia" by constituents who demanded an investigation into that country's alleged ties to President Trump. In a tweet, Trump dismissed the protests as "planned out by liberal activists."

San Francisco

Uber harassment scandal: Uber has hired former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to head the company's 'urgent" investigation into allegations of sexual harassment and discrimination, laid out this week in a shock-

Holder

ing blog by a former female employee. In the viral post, titled "Reflecting on One Very, Very Strange Year at Uber," former engineer Susan Fowler describes the ride-sharing app company as "an organization in complete, unrelenting chaos." Fowler said that she was propositioned for sex by her manager on her first day on the job, and that when she went to HR with her complaint, she was told the man in question wouldn't be punished because it was his first offense—only to find out from other female engineers that they, too, had complained about his behavior. Fowler also said she was repeatedly blocked from career advancement. Board member Arianna Huffington will also assist Holder with the investigation.

Butner, N.C.

Blind sheikh dies: Omar Abdel-Rahman. the "Blind Sheikh" convicted of plotting a wave of terrorist attacks in the U.S., died in a North Carolina prison last week. The 78-year-old was serving a life sentence at the Federal Correctional Complex in Butner, and was best known for his involvement in the 1993 truck bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City. Abdel-Rahman was not convicted in the attack, which claimed six lives, but several followers from the cleric's New Iersey and Brooklyn mosques served sentences for the bombing. He was later convicted of plotting a "day of terror" that would have resulted in simultaneous bomb attacks at the United Nations. the Lincoln and Holland tunnels in New York City, the George Washington Bridge, and New York's FBI headquarters. Abdel-Rahman also inspired fundamentalist movements in his native Egypt before fleeing to the U.S. in 1990.

'Dr. Death' convicted: A Dallas jury sentenced a neurosurgeon to life in prison this week for deliberately botching a series of spinal surgeries—the first time a surgeon has ever been given a prison sentence for bungling procedures. Christopher Duntsch, 46, earned the nickname "Dr. Death" when he was arrested in 2015 on multiple aggravatedassault charges involving 32 operations from 2012 and 2013. Four patients were left crippled by Duntsch; two others died. Among those testifying in the trial was Mary Efurd, 79, who lost a third of her blood and the full use of her legs during back surgery. A doctor who treated Efurd afterward said Duntsch had "done virtually everything wrong"—including placing implants in muscle instead of bone and amputating a nerve root. Prosecutors said Duntsch made the errors deliberately, and produced evidence he once wrote of his plans "to become a cold-blooded killer." Duntsch said he made the mistakes because of his chaotic workload.

Albuquerque; Birmingham, Ala.; **Buffalo**; Chicago; Cleveland; Houston; Milwaukee; Nashville; St. Paul, Minn.; Tampa

Wave of anti-Semitic incidents: President Donald Trump denounced anti-Semitism

as "horrible" this week amid mounting pressure to speak out on the issue, following a number of bomb threats against Iewish



Toppled tombstones

community centers nationwide and an attack at a Jewish cemetery in Missouri. More than 170 Jewish graves were found toppled at the historic St. Louis-area cemetery over the weekend. Days later, at least 10 Jewish community centers in cities such as Albuquerque, Chicago, and Houston received bomb threats. After

several Jewish organizations accused the Trump administration of failing to distance itself from the anti-Semitic rhetoric of some of its supporters, the president said anti-Semitism was "horrible, and it's going to stop." The Anne Frank Center said Trump's remarks were "too little, too late."

Washington, D.C.

Pruitt confirmed: One of the Environmental Protection Agency's longtime adversaries, Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, was



Pruitt: A new direction

confirmed as the agency's new head last week—marking the start of the Trump administration's starkly different environmental agenda. A climate change skeptic, Pruitt sued the EPA at least 14 times as Oklahoma's attorney general, accusing the Obama administration of "unwarranted regulation and systematic overreach." The night before the confirmation vote, an Oklahoma judge ordered Pruitt to release thousands of emails that showed close cooperation between his office and fossil fuel companies, with Pruitt even adopting lobbyists' exact language. But before the emails were made public, Republican senators approved Pruitt by a vote of 52 to 46. Laying out his vision on his first day in the job, Pruitt told EPA workers the agency should be "both pro-energy and jobs and pro-environment."

The world at a glance...



Rebel passports, please

Donetsk, Ukraine

Russia stirs pot: Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree recognizing passports issued to separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine. The decree amounts to a partial recognition of the self-declared People's Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk—two breakaway regions that have declared independence from Kiev. "This step by the Kremlin completely

destroys the Minsk process," said Oleksandr Turchynov, national security adviser to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. The 2015 Minsk agreement, which has not been implemented, gives Ukraine's government full control over the country's eastern border. Kiev says Moscow has sent more Russian fighters to the eastern regions of Ukraine in recent weeks as fighting has flared between pro-government and separatist forces.

Manchester, U.K.

Former Gitmo inmate joined ISIS: British family members have identified a former Guantánamo Bay prisoner as an ISIS suicide bomber who targeted Iraqi government troops. Jamal al-Harith, 50, a convert to Islam of Jamaican descent, was picked up in Afghanistan in 2002 and released from Guantánamo in 2004 after it was determined he had no connection to al Qaida. Born Ronald Fiddler in Manchester, al-Harith was one of a dozen U.K. citizens

who alleged that British agents were complicit in U.S. torture at the camp, and he received some \$1 million in compensation from the U.K. government. Though he was supposed to be monitored, he traveled to Syria in 2014, and this week drove a truck bomb into an Iraqi army base. It's unclear whether he caused any casualties.



Al-Harith in the truck bomb

Mexico City

Water crisis: Mexico's capital is in perennial need of water, but as it drills into its aquifers, the city is sinking, *The New York Times* reported this week. The Aztecs established the city on an island surrounded by lakes, but the conquering Spaniards, in order to expand it, drained the area, adding landfill and cutting down forests. The result is a city of 21 million that sits on unstable clay beds and volcanic soil. As Mexico City taps more water from the fast diminishing aquifers underneath it, the ground contracts, causing streets to buckle and buildings to collapse. To satisfy its thirst, the capital has to import 40 percent of its water from outside the city limits, yet 20 percent of residents still can't count on getting water on any given day. If a prolonged drought comes, "we're facing a potential disaster," said Ramón Aguirre Díaz, director of the city's water system.

Caracas

Defying Trump: Venezuela's Supreme Court upheld the 14-year prison sentence of opposition leader Leopoldo López last week, the day after President Trump demanded his immediate release. López, a Harvard graduate, was convicted of inciting violence during pro-



Rallying for López

tests in 2014 in which 43 people were killed; in fact, he had given a speech calling for nonviolent demonstrations. Trump demanded his release after meeting with López's wife, Lilian Tintori, at the White House. Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodríguez promptly denounced Trump's "meddling and aggression," saying he was trying to "give orders in our fatherland."

Stockholm

Immigrant riots: Sweden's mockery of President Trump has backfired. At a rally last week, Trump checked off a list of terrorist attacks by Muslim migrants in Europe, including "what's happening last night in Sweden." Baffled Swedes quickly noted that there had been no recent attack. "What has he been smoking?" tweeted former Prime Minister Carl Bildt. Trump later clarified he'd been referring to a Fox News broadcast about an immigrant crime wave in Sweden—and two days later, a riot actually did break out in an immigrant neighborhood of Stockholm. At least 10 cars were burned and several storefronts looted. Still, Swedes said that while integrating tens of thousands of refugees has been a challenge, crime has not risen appreciably. They continued tweeting under the hashtag #lastnightinsweden, posting anodyne photos of caribou caught on night-vision cams and plates of leftover meatballs.



Nail-biter: Ecuador's presidential election was thrown to a runoff this week after leftist candidate Lenín Moreno came within a hair of winning outright. Moreno, the presumptive heir of President Rafael Correa, needed 40 percent

of the vote and a 10-point lead over his closest rival to avoid a second round. He ended up with a lead of nearly 11 points over right-wing ex-banker Guillermo Lasso, but just 39.21 percent of the overall vote. Lasso may benefit from consolidated opposition support in the April runoff, which is expected to be close. He has vowed to cut taxes and kick WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange out of the Ecuadoran Embassy in London.

The world at a glance...

Beirut

Le Pen refuses headscarf: The leader of France's far-right National Front, Marine Le Pen, canceled a meeting with Lebanon's grand mufti this week because the Sunni Muslim cleric would not see her unless she wore a headscarf. Le Pen was in the country, a former colony of France, to seek Franco-Lebanese votes in the upcoming presidential election. Some



Saying 'non'

French media said Le Pen had staged the incident to play to her xenophobic base back home, but Le Pen said there's a double standard. "When Marine Le Pen refuses to don the headscarf, it is criticized," she said, "but when Michelle Obama refused to do it in Saudi Arabia, it was considered admirable."





Starved by war

Bentiu, South SudanFamine declared: Some 5 million people are facing severe food shortages in South Sudan because of an ongoing conflict in the world's youngest country. The United Nations declared a

famine there this week, saying 100,000 people in the northern Unity State are at risk of starvation. South Sudan, which won independence from Sudan in 2011, is a fertile country, but a civil war has displaced millions of people and all but destroyed agriculture, as farmers lost their livestock and equipment. People are eating only what they can forage, "whatever plants they can find and fish they can catch," said U.N. official Serge Tissot. "Our worst fears have been realized."

Baghdad

Mattis reassures Iraqis: U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis visited Baghdad this week on a mission to reassure an Iraqi government alarmed by President Trump's recent statements and actions. "We're not in Iraq to seize anybody's oil," Mattis said, in a rebuttal of Trump's remark last month that the U.S. should have taken Iraq's oil after



Mattis: Not coming for oil

its 2003 invasion—and still might. He also said he believed that a new executive order barring immigration to the U.S. from seven mostly Muslim countries, including Iraq, would make an exception for Iraqis who assisted U.S. troops and had been guaranteed admission. Meanwhile, U.S.-backed Iraqi forces in Mosul this week launched an offensive against ISIS's stronghold in the city's western half; eastern Mosul has largely been cleared of militants.

/lanila

President bombed mosques: A former death squad leader said this week that Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte personally ordered the killing of suspected criminals and the bombing of mosques during his two decades as mayor of Davao City. Arthur Lascañas, a 56-year-old former police

Lascañas: Hitman

officer, broke down in tears as he confessed during a press conference. He said he received "personal orders" from Duterte and was paid for each suspected criminal and drug user he killed. As president, Duterte has urged police and vigilantes to kill suspected criminals, and at least 7,000 have been murdered since he took office in June.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Murder mystery: North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un's half-brother had been asked to lead a government in exile before he was assassinated at Kuala Lumpur International Airport last week, *The Korea Times* reported. Kim Jong Nam, 45, turned down the request from North Korean defectors in Europe and the U.S., but the offer alone may have sealed his fate. This week, there was a break-in at the morgue where his body is being held, and authorities said they were seeking a North Korean embassy official and a North Korean airline worker for questioning. A Vietnamese and an Indonesian woman are being held in connection with the murder; police dismissed their story that they thought they were participating in a prank when they sprayed a mysterious liquid in Kim's face at the airport. "These two ladies were trained to swab the deceased's face," said Malaysian police chief Khalid Abu Bakar.

Jerusalem

Soldier sentenced: An Israeli soldier who killed a wounded Palestinian attacker has been found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to 18 months in prison. Elor Azaria, 20, was serving as a medic in the West Bank last year when two Palestinians stabbed and wounded an Israeli soldier. One assailant was shot dead; the other, Abdel Fattah al-Sharif, 21, was shot and wounded. When

Azaria arrived on the scene, he shot the immobilized al-Sharif in the head. Azaria and his family celebrated the sentence—military prosecutors had asked for three to five years—and some lawmakers called for him to be pardoned. Palestinians were outraged, saying that Palestinian teenagers had received harsher sentences for throwing rocks that injured nobody.



Azaria: Locked up

People

Dunham's talent for controversy



Lena Dunham is used to being hated, said *Rolling Stone*. "I've always annoyed people," admits the *Girls* creator and star. "I was the girl in third grade where everybody was like, 'This girl is so annoying—like, leave.'" Dunham, 30, regularly attracts controversy for her outspoken political views—she apologized after saying she was sad she hadn't had an abortion, and was rid-

iculed when she compared eating sushi to cultural appropriation. But peak hatred came during the 2016 election, when Dunham's vocal support for Hillary Clinton made her a lightning rod for abuse from all sides. "I was getting s--- from the Right for being a 'libtard'—and getting s--- from young people for supporting what they saw as a corporate candidate." Since President Trump's victory, people have accused the divisive Dunham of hurting Clinton's cause. But her close friend Taylor Swift has been attacked for the opposite reason—for failing to speak out during the campaign. "I just think everyone has to do it their way. When I was lesser known, I was like, 'Who would not share their opinion?' Then I found out that when you talk about politics, people straight up tweet you the floor plan of your house and say they're coming to your house. You have to watch it, because people are nuts."

Ozzy's many slipups

Ozzy Osbourne and his wife, Sharon, have a famously volatile marriage, said Michael Odell in The Times (U.K.). Just last year, the Black Sabbath singer was caught cheating on Sharon with his hairstylist, leading to a brief separation. At the time, Osbourne, 68, claimed he was suffering from sex addiction. He now admits that was bull. So why did he cheat? "I'm in a f---ing rock band, aren't I? There have always been groupies. I just got caught, didn't I? It was a bump in the road." There have been several other bumps. In 1989, Osbourne was arrested after his daughter Aimee's sixthbirthday party when he drank too much vodka, took all his clothes off, and tried to strangle Sharon. "Oh yeah, that. That was my worst nightmare. That's the power of addiction. That was who we used to call Bad Ozzy." The couple has also weathered Osbourne's addictions to heroin, cocaine, and various pills, as well as other slipups—like the time he gave Sharon some flowers he'd stolen from a grave, forgetting to rip off a note attached that read "In loving memory of our dearest Harry." But despite the fights and the drama, the two are still utterly devoted to one another. "Not a day goes by when we don't speak or text. Never. Even when it's been tough, even when it's been like f---ing World War III."



Timberlake's childhood in the spotlight

Justin Timberlake was trained to be famous, said Benjamin Svetkey in The Hollywood Reporter. When he was 11, Timberlake left his Tennessee home for The New Mickey Mouse Club in Orlando. From that moment on, he and a host of other now famous Mouseketeers-including Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, and Ryan Gosling—were taught everything there is to know about show business. "We were taking acting classes, music classes, dance classes," says Timberlake. "And being put in front of a live audience, learning how to engage the crowd to get a laugh. Honestly, it was like SNL for children." Soon after, Timberlake became the youngest member of boy band 'N Sync; they embarked on a world tour, and the teenage Timberlake was mobbed by female fans wherever he went. "I think we can all agree that I did not have a normal childhood," he says. "I can't really remember not being famous." It's only now, as a father to his own son with wife Jessica Biel, that Timberlake realizes how strange his early life really was. "You go through your life with your own traumas and think, 'It's not that bad.' But then you have a child of your own, and suddenly it opens all the floodgates, and you're like, 'No, no, no! That childhood trauma really did f--- me up!"

Gossip



with finding a way through to make sure that this somehow makes us stronger and closer," Jolie said. "We are and forever will be a family."

■ Lisa Marie Presley is embroiled in a bitter custody battle over her twin daughters, and is charging that her estranged husband, Michael Lockwood, had a trove of disturbing photos of children. In court papers, Presley, the 49-year-old daughter of Elvis Presley, alleged that Lockwood, 55, is the subject of a criminal investigation involving photos of children found on his electronic devices. Presley told authorities she was "shocked and horrified and sick to my stomach" over the photos, but Lockwood's lawyer dismisses her claims as "highly sensational, inaccurate, and unproven." The twins, 8, are now living with their grandmother, Priscilla Presley, 71.

Former teen idol David Cassidy this week revealed that he is suffering from dementia. Cassidy, 66, starred in the 1970sTV series The Partridge Family, and has been touring as a singer ever since. But after a disastrous show last week in which he could not remember lyrics he'd sung for a half century, Cassidy decided to go public about the disease, which afflicted both his grandfather and mother. "A part of me always knew this was coming," he told *People*, recalling how he watched his mother "disappear" into dementia before her death. "In the end, the only way I knew she recognized me is with one single tear that would drop from her eye every time I walked into the room." Cassidy has decided to stop touring and "focus on what I am, who I am, and how I've been without any distractions. I want to enjoy life."

America's military challenges

President Trump inherited several undeclared wars around the world. Will he change U.S. policy?

Where is the U.S. currently fighting?

President Trump is now overseeing several ongoing combat operations that began during previous administrations. Some 8,400 U.S. troops are still deployed in Afghanistan, the longest-running war in U.S. history, to train and assist Afghan troops in fighting the Taliban. About 5,000 troops are assisting the Iraqi army against ISIS, while another 500 Special Forces fighters are leading the battle against ISIS in Syria. In Yemen, the U.S. has been targeting Al Qaida in the Arab Peninsula and helping Saudi Arabia fight a proxy war against Iranian-backed rebels. In Libya, the Pentagon sent two B-2 bombers to take out suspected ISIS camps just a day before Trump's inauguration. In addition to those combat theaters, the U.S. has bases scattered around the globe, including in South Korea, Turkey, Japan, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Germany, and Spain. So far, the Trump administration has given mixed

signals about whether it plans to escalate existing conflicts, and about who is setting policy. "Our government continues to be in unbelievable turmoil," Gen. Tony Thomas, head of the military's Special Operations Command, said last week. "I hope they sort it out soon, because we're a nation at war."



Houthi fighters in Yemen: Backed by Iran

What's happening in Yemen?

There's a civil war going on in the small Arab country between the Iran-backed Shiite Houthi rebels and the Saudi Arabia-backed Sunni Yemeni government. The U.S. is providing support for the Saudi-led coalition, mostly in the form of refueling for the Saudi aircraft pounding suspected militants. It has drawn criticism for that support as civilian casualties mount, particularly after Saudi

airstrikes that hit a wedding party and a funeral and killed 300 civilians. Direct U.S. involvement in Yemen has mostly taken the form of drone strikes targeting the extremely active al Qaida affiliate based there, such as the 2011 strike that killed American-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki. After President Trump's ground strike on an al Qaida commander there last month degenerated into a protracted firefight—killing a Navy SEAL and 23 civilians as well as a dozen militants-Yemen asked for a "reassessment" of U.S. ground raids. The Trump administration insists that operation was "a success," but has not indicated whether it will alter existing U.S. policy toward Yemen's civil war.

What about ISIS?

The U.S. is taking a leading role in the fight against what's left of the Islamic State in Syria, Iraq, and part of Libya. Last year, the U.S. bombed ISIS strongholds in Libya, including the key port of Sirte, for weeks. In

The impact of the travel ban on allies

President Trump's executive order temporarily banning all refugees and all visitors from seven majority-Muslim countries has been halted by the U.S. courts, but it has already had an effect on U.S. troops abroad. Five of the seven countries covered under the order are places where the U.S. is engaged in military operations: Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, and Somalia. That means some of the people excluded are locals who have been helping the U.S. at great personal risk-particularly in Iraq. "This has caused massive disappointment in the hearts of every Iraqi who is fighting radicalism," an Iraqi general told Fox News. Iraqi militias, including the Hezbollah Brigades, have threatened an "earthshaking response" against U.S. troops in Iraq. Trump has also alienated Iragis by repeating his belief that the U.S. should "take Iraq's oil"—which would be illegal under international law. "There is nothing Trump could have said that would be more corrosive to our interests in the Middle East," says Ryan Crocker, former U.S. ambassador to Baghdad. "It plays to the myth that we were in Iraq to take their oil." Once ISIS is defeated, Crocker said, fears that U.S. troops will steal Iraq's oil could lead Iraqis to attack U.S. troops.

Iraq, U.S. troops have been embedded with the Iraqi army as it tries to retake Mosul from ISIS. But Iraqi lawmakers say Trump has endangered that relationship. (See box.) The president is reportedly considering deploying ground troops to Syria to speed up the effort to destroy ISIS, and has also said he'd like to coordinate military efforts with Russia. Analysts say that Russia is truly not fighting ISIS in Syria, but instead has deployed most of its troops, airpower, and equipment to shore up President Bashar al-Assad in his civil war with various militias, including Kurdish militias allied with the U.S.

What's the status of Afghanistan?

The 8,400 U.S. troops in Afghanistan maintain bases to support the Afghan government and assist the Afghans in fighting a continuing Taliban insurgency. The Pentagon has asked for more troops

to help train Afghan forces, and Trump reportedly told Afghan President Ashraf Ghani in a phone call that he was considering a troop surge. The U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. John W. Nicholson, said this month that the Taliban currently controls more Afghan territory than at any time since 2001. He said the fight there is "in a stalemate," because Taliban fighters can easily find sanctuary in neighboring Pakistan and mount attacks from bases there.

What about North Korea?

The Stalinist dictatorship, which has been building an arsenal of nuclear bombs, just tested a new intermediate-range missile. The missile shows technical elements that indicate North Korea is

> closer to creating an intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the U.S. mainland with a nuclear warhead. In January, Trump tweeted that an operational North Korean ICBM "won't happen!" but he made no direct statement about the February test. However, Trump has said in the past that he would pressure China to rein in its rogue client state. "China has control, absolute control, over North Korea," he said. "And they should make that problem disappear." China, however, has always been reluctant to intervene in North Korea, and already has had much friction with the Trump administration over trade, Taiwan, and Beijing's territorial claim over the South China Sea. China, for its part, says Trump should deal directly with Pyongyang. "We believe," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang, "that dialogue and consultation offer the way out."

Best columns: The U.S.

The limits of Milo's free speech

German Lopez Vox.com

Milo Yiannopoulos "finally went too far," said German Lopez. The gay Breitbart News editor and professional "alt-right" provocateur had become an unlikely conservative hero over the past year by attacking feminists, transsexuals, black people, immigrants, Muslims, and Jews in the most sensationalist and vulgar way possible. His disdain for "political correctness" even earned him a key speaking role at this week's Conservative Political Action Conference. That invitation, however, was withdrawn when a video surfaced in which Milo defended the idea of 13-year-old boys having "consensual" sex with "older men." But why did it take something as awful as Milo's advocacy for child molestation to topple him as a hero of the Right? This is a guy who claims he "went gay" so he "didn't have to deal with nutty broads," calls feminism "a cancer," mocks transgender people as "gay men dressing up for attention," blames "Islam, not radical Islam" for terrorism, and insists that the white Christian "patriarchy" should run the country. Conservatives defended all this bile as "free speech," and even wanted to give Milo a platform to spout it at CPAC—until he offended them. Now, at least, we know where the lines of political correctness are drawn.

Obamacare's lasting impact

Eugene Robinson
The Washington Post

After seven years of voting to repeal Obamacare dozens of times, why are Republicans finding it so agonizing to come up with a replacement? asked Eugene Robinson. Simple: Obamacare was a huge success. It's not that the program wasn't flawed; costs to some middle-class people were too high and many insurance companies lost money, largely because Republicans did everything possible "to sabotage the program." Obamacare succeeded, however, by fundamentally changing the health-care debate in this country. Republicans had always insisted health care was just another commodity, which you could either afford to buy or could not. Thanks to Obamacare, however, "access to affordable health care is now seen as a right" for all Americans. And government is seen as the guarantor of that right. Republicans who once denounced Obamacare as "socialism" are now frantically scrambling—and failing—to find ways to preserve its highly popular provisions, such as affordable policies for people with pre-existing conditions. If the plan Republicans finally agree upon does take health care away from millions of people or forces them to spend a lot more on it, "they will pay a grievous political price." And Barack Obama will have the last laugh.

The return of the Whig Party

Jeff Jacoby
The Boston Globe

"History doesn't repeat itself," said Jeff Jacoby. "But it has an unnerving tendency to rhyme." As President Trump turns Washington on its head, it's a good time to look back on another divisive chief executive from New York: Millard Fillmore. When Fillmore became our 13th president upon Zachary Taylor's death in 1850, he immediately plunged the nation into turmoil. Fillmore was hostile toward immigrants and free trade, supported slavery, and was drawn to conspiracy theories. His first act was to fire every member of Taylor's Cabinet, "which he resented for having ignored him when he was vice president." Fillmore vigorously enforced the repugnant Fugitive Slave Act, allowing escaped slaves to be hunted down like animals. He also "denounced Northern communities that vowed to resist the law," and even charged "41 Americans with treason for refusing to join a slave-catching posse." After Fillmore lost the 1852 election in a landslide, his fractured Whig Party collapsed. In 1856 Fillmore ran for president on the nativist Know-Nothing ticket, with the slogan "Americans must rule America." Today, Fillmore is deservedly "lost in obscurity." But his politics have made a comeback.

"If Democrats try to please their Trump-hating constituents by screaming impeachment and liberal media tries to garner audience by jumping openly and vociferously on the bandwagon, the Trumpians will respond in kind by stirring the pot through their media. The result might well be violence. Not rhetorical violence. Actual political violence. Actual conflicts between anti-Trumpers and Trumpers in the streets of our cities. Those who believe Trump is a unique menace whose threat to our democratic way of life will be met with those who believe the elites are using illicit means to oust the legitimately elected president of the United States. This is one possible future."

John Podhoretz in Commentary Magazine.com

It must be true... I read it in the tabloids

- An Ontario recycling-plant worker found bundles of \$50 bills hidden inside a discarded TV set. Rick Deschamps, general manager of the electronics-processing firm, said a female employee had been disassembling the TV when she "came running up with this security cashbox and she goes, 'I found \$10,000!' I opened it up and I saw four bundles of \$50 bills and I went, 'I think that's more." The stash amounted to more than \$75,000 in U.S. currency. Documents inside the cashbox led police to its rightful owner, who said he'd inherited the money, stashed it inside the TV for safekeeping, then forgot about it.
- A 13-year-old Palestinian boy last week broke the world record for most full-body revolutions in one minute while maintaining a chest stand. Mohammed Alsheikh of Gaza earned an entry in Guinness World Records by "running" his feet around his body 38 times in Amman, Jordan. He smashed the previous world record of 29. set by a noted British circus contortionist. Alsheikh, who was born with an extremely flexible spine and practices for hours every day, said his "dream for the future is to be famous and well known throughout the world."
- A Pennsylvania man returned a library book his father took out 75 years ago, which had amassed a \$554 late fee. Robert Lockman Jr. found a copy of Val Rides the Oregon Trail in his basement and saw that his late father had checked it out on Dec. 2. 1941, five days before Pearl Harbor. Lockman quickly returned the volume to the library in Wilkes-Barre. "My dad was an honest quy," he says. "That's what he would have done." He admits he did wonder "if they're going to want the fine!" But librarians laughed it off.



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Best columns: Europe

SWEDEN

Fox News is wrong about migrants

Gustaf Tronarp Aftonbladet

GREECE

Why not cash in on antiquities?

Notis Papadopoulos To Vima Fox News fed Donald Trump a festering pile of lies about Sweden, said Gustaf Tronarp. During a campaign-style rally in Florida last week, Trump mentioned what happened "last night in Sweden" as he recited a list of terrorist attacks in Europe that he blamed on Muslim migrants. We Swedes were mystified, because precisely nothing had happened in Sweden. Turns out the president had watched a Tucker Carlson segment on Fox News the previous night about the supposed soaring crime rate in Sweden since we began accepting migrants on a large scale in 2011. The segment, based on a sensationalist documentary by a rightwing filmmaker, was "full of sweeping claims,"

No wonder Greece is broke—it turns up its nose at free money, said Notis Papadopoulos. The Greek government rejected a request last week from Italian fashion brand Gucci to stage a 15-minute catwalk show at the Parthenon. "The unique cultural character of the Acropolis monuments is inconsistent with this sort of event," the Archaeological Council said in a snippy little statement. Of course, this is the same council that is only too happy to abandon our ancient sites "to the mercy of the weather and looters." It simply doesn't have enough money to preserve everything. Even the island of Delos, fabled birthplace

exaggerations, and outright falsehoods." The show claimed that gun violence and rape have increased, when actually those violent crimes, like all violent crime in Sweden, occur at about the same rate as in 2005—and at a much lower one, by the way, than in the U.S. Homicides here are still all but unheard of. In fact, the biggest surge in lawlessness associated with asylum seekers has been a rise in attacks on refugee centers by right-wing vigilantes. Fox News, like the rest of the U.S. and U.K. right-wing press, wants to paint Sweden as menaced by criminal migrants because it fits with their xenophobic agenda. But that story just doesn't fit the facts.

of the gods Apollo and Artemis and one of the most important World Heritage Sites we have, lacked a single guard against looters until recently. Gucci was willing to pay more than \$2 million for its brief use of Athens' ancient temple, money that "could have paid the annual salary of 100 guards" for important sites. And the fashion show would have provided priceless free publicity. "National pride and dignity are all very well, but it is far more important to protect the ruins we inherited from our ancestors." These sites "belong not only to us but also to humanity," and we have "a sacred duty to preserve them."

How they see us: Europe starts to doubt the U.S.

NATO ministers used to meet annually to talk about external threats to the West, said Simon Tisdall in *The Guardian* (U.K.). But at the Munich Security Conference last week, European NATO members were more concerned about a threat coming from inside the alliance: President Trump's America. Trump has shown contempt for U.S. allies in the European Union by applauding Brexit and calling on more nations to leave the bloc. And he has destabilized NATO by blasting the alliance as "obsolete" while showering Russian President Vladimir Putin with compliments. European lead-

ers now fear that the Kremlin will "exploit and manipulate a vain American president and his gullible advisers," and intensify its bullying of Russia's Western neighbors.

"Trust has been fundamentally damaged," said Carsten Luther in *Die Zeit* (Germany). U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis and Vice President Mike Pence, both in attendance, tried to reassure Europeans with placid speeches in which they reaffirmed America's commitment to NATO and declared that Russia would be "held to account" for its aggression in Ukraine. But whether they are "considered believable is another question." The doubts became plain when German Defense Minister Ursula von der Leyen spoke, warning that NATO is based on common values that prohibit torture and targeting of civilians and that the West should fight terrorism and not Islam. We believe that Mattis agrees with von der Leyen and all the other defense ministers—but does he speak for his boss? "Nobody knows."



Mattis and von der Leyen: Unbreakable alliance?

Even the attending U.S. officials seemed doubtful of how much authority they had, said Julian Reichelt in *Bild* (Germany). They weren't allowed to answer questions or "speak one syllable" beyond their prepared remarks—a noticeable departure from their accessibility most years and a kind of tyrannical muzzling "otherwise seen only in dictatorships." Members of the American delegation told me "in fearful whispers" that they can't be truthful with the president if they wish to keep their jobs. A kind of "putsch paranoia" reigns in the White House, and Trump's

own appointees don't know when he might undercut their solemn pledges to allies with some ignorant, capricious tweet.

Clearly, Germany must step up, said Daniel Brössler in the Süddeutsche Zeitung (Germany). Echoing Trump, Mattis told the summit that the U.S. can no longer shoulder the bulk of NATO's costs, and that member states must honor their pledge to spend at least 2 percent of gross domestic product on defense. If they don't, he warned, the U.S. will "moderate its commitment to the alliance." But even if Germany could hit that target by doubling its defense budget to \$75 billion, throwing "massive amounts of money" at defense is not the answer. We must spend wisely, not just more. That leaves Britain to do the heavy lifting, said Edward Lucas in The Times (U.K.). We are already "the indispensable outside military power" in the Baltic Sea, where Putin might launch his next offensive, and our nuclear deterrent is strong. "The end of Europe's Pax Americana" will mean a greater defense role for Britain.

Russia: Second thoughts on celebrating Trump

We can put away the champagne now, said Maxim Trudolyubov in Vedomosti. President Trump is apparently not going to be the Russia-friendly, sanctions-lifting U.S. leader that so many Russians had expected. Ever since Trump was forced to dump his national security adviser, Michael Flynn, over alleged improper contacts with Russia's ambassador to the U.S., the Trump administration has lurched into anti-Russian overdrive. Over the past week, administration officials have accused Russia of interfering in Western elections, urged NATO to ramp up defense spending, and even demanded that Russia return Crimea to Ukraine. Obviously, Trump is under tremendous pressure "to appear tough

on Russia." At this point, it's "hard to imagine the president has any flexibility" in negotiations, as his every move will be "under a microscope."

Russians winced as they watched the "painful and depressing spectacle" of Trump's recent press conference, said Mikhail Rostovsky in Moskovsky Komsomolets. Trump's wild statements were met by hostile press questions in what looked like "female mud wrestling, that popular, no-holds-barred American entertainment." Alas, it wasn't amusing. It's quite obvious that President Trump, who "seemed like a breath of fresh air for Russian-American relations," is a figurehead with no real power. His railing against "fake news" is "a recognition of his own impotence, his inability to change anything." The powerful business and defense lobbies control Russia policy in the U.S.—not the president.



The bromance is over.

Now that Trump has been revealed to be so ineffectual, the "bromance is over" between him and President Vladimir Putin, said Ivan Tsvetkov in *Russia-Direct.org*. Rumor has it that the Kremlin recently ordered state TV to "stop kowtowing to Trump." That's bad news for ordinary Russians. The Kremlin had been exploiting the obsession with Trump, making the U.S. president the main news topic, to "distract Russians from current day-to-day and economic problems and bring more drama into their lives." What will fill that void now? Some experts fear the Kremlin may invent "a new short victorious war." It could even ratchet up tensions with NATO in order to "reinvigorate the 'besieged fortress' narrative" ahead of Rus-

sia's 2018 presidential election. And that would be "extremely dangerous, for the entire international security system."

The West's growing sense of insecurity heightens those risks, said Fyodor Lukyanov in Rossiyskaya Gazeta. In contrast to the smugness of the Obama years, the Americans under Trump are in a "period of self-doubt." They are "in a panic" over alleged Russian intervention in their elections, and their fear has infested Western European countries that have upcoming elections, notably France and Germany. People across the West point to a strange cocktail of hackers, trolls, Russia's English-language RT TV channel, and so-called fake news—"a new name for disinformation"— as proof of Russia's supposed omnipotence. At the same time, they portray their own societies as "totally defenseless and vulnerable." Will Trump, with his fragile ego, overcompensate? This unpredictability is dangerous for us all.

UGANDA

The migrant crisis nobody talks about

Editorial
The Monitor

ISRAEL

Trump's risky games in the Middle East

Editorial
The National
(United Arab Emirates)

While the West has been fretting about refugees entering Europe, Uganda is overwhelmed by its own crisis, said *The Monitor*. Over the past six months, half a million South Sudanese have poured into our country, fleeing "ethnic killings" in their homeland. They join the 240,000 who had already arrived here since civil war erupted in South Sudan in 2013, creating the third-largest refugee crisis in the world after Syria's and Afghanistan's. Now that famine has just been declared in parts of South Sudan, we can expect even more desperate families. Yet Uganda has come up with no policy "to deal with this serious threat to its security and stability."

President Trump's vague, off-the-cuff statement dismissing the two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians has emboldened extremists, said *The National*. During a press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last week, Trump overturned "decades of settled U.S. policy" when he said he was "looking at two-state and one-state and I like the one both parties like." His ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, tried to walk back the gaffe, saying the U.S. still supports a two-state solution, but it was too late. The "most extreme elements in Israeli society" had already seized on Trump's statement as proof

South Sudanese arrivals are competing with Ugandans for scarce water and resources, and "clashes are inevitable." What is the government going to do about this? So far, its attempt at meddling in the civil war has only made things worse: Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has been accused of backing South Sudan President Salva Kiir against Kiir's exiled former deputy, Riek Machar. All African intermediaries should be focused on getting Kiir to implement the 2015 peace agreement so that Machar can return from exile and the nation can reconcile. Our northern neighbor has become a "real and present danger" to our domestic peace.

that Palestinian statehood is dead. But those who believe a one-state solution would be favorable to Israel are "making a serious, indeed deadly, miscalculation." If the single state were a democracy, Palestinians with their higher birth rate would soon outnumber Jews. Palestinian extremists would cheer that result. If the new state denied citizenship to Palestinians—the goal of Israeli extremists—it would be an apartheid state, something the world abhors. Remember too that Palestinians only accept the occupation because statehood is "the light at the end of the tunnel." Remove that light and hell would erupt. "America should be more careful."

Talking points

Noted

- The costs of providing travel and security for President Trump and his family on various trips have exceeded \$11 million in a month, including three weekend trips to Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort and trips taken by his sons Eric and Donald Jr. to promote the family business abroad. In addition, it costs about \$500,000 a day to provide security to Melania and Barron Trump while they live in Trump Tower. During President Obama's eight years in office, his travel expenses totaled \$97 million—a figure Trump could surpass in a year. The Washington Post
- Though crime is at historic lows in much of the nation, including New York City and Los Angeles, murder rates in four big cities—Chicago, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Memphis—have returned to levels not seen since the 1990s. Criminologists blame drug gangs, a flood of guns, high unemployment, and a breakdown of trust between the communities and police.

The Wall Street Journal

Los Angeles was the most congested city in the



world last year, with the average driver wasting 104 hours sitting in traffic in

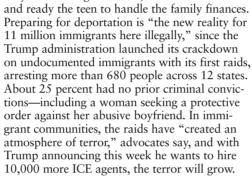
the city in 2016. Moscow and New York City came in second and third. USA Today

■ To build a wall at the Mexican border, the federal government would need to buy or condemn thousands of pieces of private property. A 2006 attempt to build a 700-mile-long fence at the border bogged down over 120 lawsuits by landowners that are still in the courts.

The Wall Street Journal

Deportations: Immigration crackdown begins

"Leticia Sosa has a plan, and a list of urgent tasks," said Lomi Kriel in the *Houston Chronicle*. Fearing a knock on the door from Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents, the Mexicanborn mother of five will soon notarize a document ceding legal responsibility for her four youngest children to her 18-year-old daughter Erika,



President Obama deported 2.7 million illegal immigrants throughout his eight years in office—more than any previous president, said **Austin Yack** in *NationalReview.com*. Where was "the press outcry then?" In nearly every nation in the world, including liberal icon Canada, the deporta-



One of the ICE raids last week

tion of illegal immigrants "is understood to be a necessary duty of the state," said Seth Barron in City-Journal.org. Immigration enforcement "is an uncontroversial aspect of national life" in any nation that takes its borders seriously. It's time we did, too.

The Trump administration says it isn't going to engage

in mass deportations, said Victoria DeFrancesco **Soto** in *NBCNews.com*, but admits ICE agents will be far more aggressive. Under Obama, ICE was told to prioritize serious criminals—a policy that caused visible frustration among ICE officers. Under Trump, though, ICE has been given a green light to make "collateral arrests" of anyone who has committed "a chargeable criminal offense," such as driving without a license or using fake IDs-which are part and parcel of life as an undocumented immigrant. Take Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos, who was brought from Mexico when she was 14 and who in 2008 was caught using a fake ID to get a job at a water park. The Obama administration chose not to deport her for humanitarian reasons. Weeks into Trump's presidency, the ICE vanked her away from her children and flew her back to Mexico. Now that Trump is president, all undocumented immigrants must "prepare for the worst."

Trump: The sanity question

Is the 45th president of the United States mentally ill? In the month since the election, said Robin Abcarian in the Los Angeles Times, Donald Trump's mental state has become an issue of "fierce public debate." Sen. Al Franken (D-Minn.) claimed that several Republican colleagues have admitted they're concerned about the president's mental well-being; other Democratic lawmakers have raised the prospect of invoking the 25th Amendment, under which a president can be declared "incapacitated" and removed from office. The psychiatrist who defined narcissistic personality disorder reacted to the speculation by saying that the president couldn't be diagnosed as mentally ill, because he "causes severe distress rather than experiencing it." Then came the bizarre press conference last week, when Trump repeated several blatant falsehoods and went on a series of angry "tirades." The man is clearly "kind of crazy"—but is he "*crazy* crazy"?

I don't know about crazy, but Trump is clearly "not well," said Jacob Bacharach in *NewRepublic .com*. At that alarming press conference, the president seemed unhinged, making faces and doing "silly voices," badly stating falsehoods about his electoral college margin, and referring

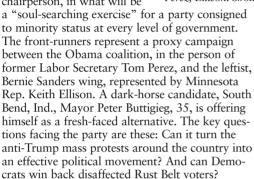
off-handedly to "blowing up a Russian ship" and to a nuclear holocaust. "It was all quite bonkers." Actually, it's Trump's critics who've lost their minds, said Keith Ablow in FoxNews.com. This is a man who has "acquired billions of dollars through complex real estate transactions"; built his name into a "worldwide brand"; and beat 16 Republicans and a Democrat to win the presidency. Could he have achieved all that if he were mentally unstable? "Trump is stone cold sane."

Please, enough with the "armchair diagnoses," said Olivia Goldhill in Qz.com. Not only does all this baseless speculation stigmatize people suffering from genuine mental illness, it's also impossible to diagnose people without examining them in person. Indeed, the American Psychiatric Association actually prohibits its members from "commenting on a public figure's mental health." There's another reason we should "avoid psychiatrically labeling our leaders," said Richard Friedman in The New York Times. "It lets them off the moral hook." You can be vain, mean, and incompetent without being mentally ill, and "the nation doesn't need a shrink to help it decide whether President Trump is fit to serve." All we need is "common sense."

Talking points

DNC: Democrats at a crossroads

More than three months after a devastating presidential election loss, "Democrats are finally getting ready to settle on a new leader," said Caitlin Huey-Burns in *RealClear Politics.com*. This week, 447 Democratic National Committee members will gather in Atlanta to select their next chairperson, in what will be



To win national elections, "Democrats need to fire up Millennials," said Miles Howard in WBUR.org. That's why the party should pick Ellison. Young voters saw Clinton as too cozy with the big-money establishment, and believe the DNC "rigged" the primary against Sanders. Ellison has been an aggressive champion of the working class, minori-



Perez, Ellison: Should the party move left?

ties, and young people, and has Sanders' "full-throated" support. Democrats should be "more progressive, not less," said **Steve Phillips** in *The New York Times*. Clinton didn't lose because the white working class backed Trump. She lost because 503,000 more voters in Wisconsin, Michigan, and

Pennsylvania chose the Libertarian and Green Party candidates in 2016 than in 2012. Clinton lost those three states—and the election—by just 78,000 votes. Democrats must reclaim their progressive base, rather than embark on an "ill-fated quest" to win over culturally conservative whites.

When will Democrats learn their lesson? asked Alexandra DeSanctis in *NationalReview.com*. By choosing Ellison or Perez—"one a radically progressive representative, the other a radically progressive former federal bureaucrat"—they overlook Buttigieg, who can appeal to their base and the working class. A veteran of Afghanistan from a heartland state, he'd be a crucial asset for a party "hopelessly disconnected from Middle America." Buttigieg is also a gay man elected twice "in a state that skews decidedly to the religious right," said Erika Smith in *The Sacramento Bee*. He'd be the smartest choice, "not that I'm convinced anyone who really matters is listening."

GOP: Why it's sticking with Trump

"Less than a month into his first term, Trump resembles Nixon at his most besieged," said Brian Beutler in NewRepublic.com—"angry, flailing, driven to distraction." He's at war with the intelligence community, the press, and the judiciary, and faces an ongoing FBI investigation of his campaign's Russian ties. Gallup finds his approval rating has sunk to 40 percent. "But unlike Nixon, Trump enjoys the complicity of nearly his entire party." What, exactly, is it going to take for Republicans to break with their volatile president? Until now, said Noah Rothman in CommentaryMagazine.com, Republicans have consoled themselves with the idea that a Trump presidency gives them a "once-in-a-generation" opportunity to pass conservative legislation, such as repealing Obamacare and cutting tax rates. But Trump's constant turmoil has been a major distraction, and so far, he and Congress aren't close to passing any major legislation. If Trump continues on this "present trajectory," it could cost the GOP control of the House in 2018.

If you're waiting for Republicans to take on Trump, "you could be waiting a long time," said Natalie Jackson in *HuffingtonPost.com*. Right now, most of them have one thing on their mind:

"re-election in 2018." In today's polarized environment, that means appeasing the base—and despite what liberals and independents think, 87 percent of Republicans approve of the job Trump's doing. They expected him to be combative, and see him as trying to fulfill his campaign promises. As long as Republican voters stick with Trump, "there's no real incentive for GOP law-makers to challenge him on anything."

Everything could change if the Russia investigation produces a Watergate-level scandal, said Juan Williams in *TheHill.com*. Then Republicans would fear that 2018 would become a "change election," and their calculations would shift. The biggest danger Trump faces is Mike Pence, said Jennifer Rubin in The Washington Post. The calm, composed, and dignified vice president is the polar opposite of Trump, and highly popular among conservatives on Capitol Hill. "If you gave 52 GOP senators a secret ballot and asked if they would prefer Pence or Trump, would Trump get more than a handful of votes?" Democrats would also welcome a "normal" president. If Trump continues to cause chaos, Republicans might finally walk away—"into Pence's waiting arms."

Wit & Wisdom

"The only words that don't offend a single human being are words delivered without purpose." Lena Dunham, quoted in Glamour.com

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." Abraham Lincoln, quoted in BusinessInsider.com

"Create like a god; command like a king; work like a slave." Sculptor Constantin Brancusi, quoted in ArtNet.com

"Only shallow people do not judge appearances." Oscar Wilde, quoted in The Federalist

"Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." Mike Tyson, quoted in Fortune.com

"Love is not just looking at each other, it's looking in the same direction." Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, quoted in HuffingtonPost.com

"Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet depreciate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground." Frederick Douglass, quoted in MentalFloss.com

Poll watch

- Americans' trust in the news media is at a historic low: 32% of Americans say they have "a great deal" or "fair" amount of trust in the media. Among Republicans, 14% express trust in the media, while 51% of Democrats do. Gallup
- By a 34% to 21% margin, those who paid attention to President Trump's combative press conference last week say it worsened, rather than improved, their views of Trump's presidency. 40% said it didn't change their opinion. HuffPost/YouGov

Technology

Social media: When a YouTube star goes too far

Here's definitive proof that "digital stars have arrived," said Todd Spangler in Variety.com. YouTube celebrity Felix Kjellberg, better known to his 53 million subscribers as PewDiePie, is embroiled in a public relations meltdown worthy of a Hollywood idol. After The Wall Street Journal revealed last week that the 27-year-old Swedish comedian had posted nine videos online that included anti-Semitic jokes or Nazi imagery, Kjellberg apologized for what he called gags that went "too far." It was too little, too late for his biggest sponsors

and business partners. Disney's Maker Studios, a network of online video creators where PewDiePie was the star talent, cut ties with him, and Google canceled his show on its YouTube Red subscription service. Nissan, which paid him for a promotional video last year, said it wouldn't work with him again. Kjellberg is the "poster child of YouTube stardom," said Madhumita Murgia in the *Financial Times*. Some 9 million people a day tune in to watch the college dropout play video games and crack jokes—an audience "larger than those of most cable TV networks." He earned an estimated \$15 million last year, "well above the average salary of a Fortune 500 chief executive."

It was inevitable that a scandal of this sort "would emerge in the rapidly changing world of YouTube stardom," said **Nathan McAlone** in *BusinessInsider.com*. Social media celebrities are



Sponsors are fleeing PewDiePie.

now getting their own shows on traditional cable networks or streaming services such as YouTube Red. But many of these YouTube stars built their massive fan bases at least partly through shock value. Kjellberg swears profusely in his homemade videos and casually uses the N-word. One of the videos highlighted by WSJ saw him hire two Indian men to hold up a banner reading "Death to all Jews." Advertisers and media companies initially turned to internet celebrities like Kjellberg "as a way to reach the ad blockers and cord cutters of the world," said Sapna

Maheshwari in *The New York Times*. But in their desperation to tap this elusive young audience, many firms skimped on the vetting and oversight of their new digital partners. In the wake of Kjellberg's implosion, experts say companies are now likely to focus on whether an internet celebrity is "brand safe"—though how they'll draw that line or enforce it isn't clear.

Despite all this furor, PewDiePie is "still going to make millions," said Madeline Berg in *Forbes.com*. Although some advertisers might try to distance themselves from Kjellberg, the sheer size of his following means that his YouTube videos will likely bring in some \$7 million in ad revenue this year. And while networks and studios can refuse to cast traditional Hollywood stars when they say something dumb or racist, there's nothing to stop PewDiePie from churning out videos—offensive or not—from his apartment.

Innovation of the week

"A visor that allows legally blind people to see is no longer Star Trek fiction," said Geoffrey



Fowler in The Wall Street Journal. The eSight 3 headset uses augmented-reality technology to help people with severely limited vision see the world in detail. A high-speed, high-definition camera inside the lightweight visor captures the wearer's surroundings. Those images are displayed on screens "that sit very close to the eyes." Using a handheld remote, wearers can dial up the contrast, zoom in and out, or pan across objects such as street signs. ESight, which has sold about 1,000 visors to date, says the technology "has worked for about three-quarters of people who have tried it." The biggest hurdle is the device's \$10,000 price tag. "While the device has FDA clearance as a Class I medical device. most insurance doesn't cover it."

Bytes: What's new in tech

Job hunting on Facebook

"Facebook is getting into the job market," said Jessica Guynn in USA Today. After years of speculation that the social media giant would try to take on LinkedIn, Glassdoor, and other job-listing sites, Facebook last week unveiled a batch of tools that allow businesses to post openings on their newsfeeds. Job listings will then appear in the feeds of anyone who has liked a business's Facebook page, and companies can pay to make sure their posts reach certain demographics. Applying for a gig is easy: Job seekers click an "Apply now" button, and Facebook will auto-fill the application with some of the users' profile information, such as their name and location. The challenge for Facebook is that recruiters often scour social media to research prospective employees. Will job seekers willingly "commingle their personal and professional lives"?

Disaster-proof apps

A new Weather Channel smartphone app keeps users up to date "even during earthquakes, tornadoes, and terrorist attacks," said Stephen Shankland in *CNET.com*. Mobile networks are often overwhelmed during disasters, but the Android app will receive emergency alerts "even when centralized networks fail."

The app uses Bluetooth and Wi-Fi networks to send data from phone to phone across distances of 200 to 500 feet, an IBM-developed technology known as mesh networking. Technologists have long touted mesh networking as a way to connect regions with subpar cellular networks. Including mesh networking in a popular smartphone app could help the technology go mainstream. For now, the Weather Channel's app will only be available in Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Smartphone hackers unlock cars

Millions of drivers who use connected car apps on their Android phones are vulnerable to hacking, said Andy Greenberg in Wired.com. A growing number of car owners use smartphone apps to quickly "locate, lock, and unlock their rides." But most car apps lack "even basic software defenses," according to researchers at Russian cybersecurity firm Kaspersky. During tests of nine different Android connected-car apps, researchers found that hackers could use any of them "to locate a car, unlock it, and in some cases start its ignition." Researchers said simple fixes to the apps—like encrypting passwords stored on the phone or adding fingerprint authentication—would "go a long way" toward boosting security.

My Impossible: Surfing prepared me for my photography business. It taught me it's okay to fall over a few times before finding your feet. Ryan Struck, Ryan Struck Photography Hiscox Customer mpossible Hiscox business insurance. Helping the courageous overcome the impossible. HISCO hiscox.com/impossible | 888-477-0209

Pollution in the world's deepest waters

In a sign that even the most remote and inaccessible places on Earth are not immune to human activity, high levels of toxic pollution have been discovered in the deepest waters on the planet. British researchers used robotic submarines to retrieve small crustaceans from the Mariana Trench, in the Western Pacific, and the Kermadec Trench, north of New Zealand, both of which are more than 6 miles deep. When they analyzed these hardy critters, they found they were contaminated with levels of toxic chemicals up to 50 times higher than those in species that survive in China's most heavily

polluted rivers. The contaminants were persistent organic pollutants, or POPs—industrial chemicals that can take decades to break down. Many POPs, including one that was discovered in every sample taken for the study, have been outlawed since the late 1970s because of their links to cancer. The study's lead author, Alan Jamieson from Newcastle University, says it wasn't a surprise to find the chemicals in the deepest parts of the ocean—once the toxic particles reach the sea, currents and gravity disperse them rapidly. But he says the "sky-high" level of contamination was unexpected and worrisome.



POPs were found in deepwater crustaceans.

"We still think of the deep ocean as being this remote and pristine realm, safe from human impact," he tells *The Guardian* (U.K.). "Our research shows that, sadly, this could not be further from the truth."



Brazilian peppertree's red berries

The superbug-fighting weed

An invasive shrub known as the Brazilian peppertree could be a new weapon in the fight against antibiotic-resistant superbugs, reports WashingtonPost.com. A relative of poison ivy indigenous to South America, the Brazilian peppertree is the scourge of homeowners across the southern U.S., Florida in particular. But traditional healers in the Amazon have been using its bright red berries to treat skin infections for centuries, and researchers from the University of Iowa and Emory University believe the plant may contain a substance that effectively neutralizes methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). The team infected mice with the bacteria and treated some of them with Brazilian peppertree extract. While the untreated mice developed skin lesions, those who were given the plant compound did not. "It essentially disarms the MRSA bacteria, preventing it from excreting the toxins it uses as weapons to damage tissues,' explains Cassandra Quave, an ethnobotanist at Emory. "The body's normal immune system then stands a better chance of healing a wound." The findings could lead to new ways of controlling antibiotic resistance and treating MRSA infections, which claimed 11,000 lives in the U.S. in 2011.

Firstborns are smartest

Here's one to fuel sibling rivalries: New

research suggests the order in which brothers and sisters are born may influence their relative intelligence. Researchers at the Universities of Edinburgh and Sydney analyzed data on roughly 5,000 American children, who were followed from pregnancy until age 14. They found that firstborns consistently outperformed their younger siblings on IQ tests—including for reading, matching letters, and picture vocabularyand that the disparities began just 12 months after birth. The team speculates that this advantage may be traced back to the extra attention doting parents give to their first child. "First-time parents tend to want to do everything right and generally have a greater awareness of their interactions with and investments in the firstborn," the study's co-author, Jee-Yeon Lehmann, tells Today.com. With each additional child that parents have, Lehmann explains, they tend to have less time and energy to devote to activities they perceive as nonessential, such as reading, arts and crafts, and playing musical instruments. Another factor could be that first-time mothers are less likely to drink, smoke, or take part in other risky behaviors during pregnancy.

Diet key to weight loss

Exercise has many proven health benefits, but those who dutifully log miles on the treadmill in the hopes of shedding stubborn pounds may want to reconsider their approach to weight loss. In a new study,

approach to weight loss. In a new study, researchers at Loyola University in Chicago found that healthy eating habits appear to be more important than exercise for long-term weight control, reports

LiveScience.com. The team analyzed the physical activity and weight fluctuations of roughly 2,000 adults from the U.S., Ghana, Jamaica, South Africa, and the Sevchelles. In each of the five countries, many of those who did 2½ hours of moderate weekly exercise actually put on more pounds over two years than their more sedentary peers. The most likely explanation for this? Exercise tends to boost appetite, meaning active people eat more than they otherwise would. The findings suggest that physical activity alone is "not enough to prevent weight gain," says lead author Lara Dugas. "What we really need to look at is what people are eating."

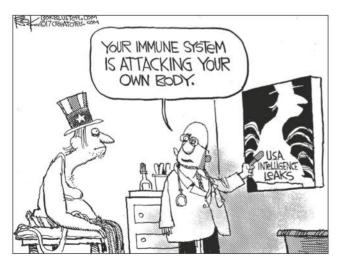
Health scare of the week Snowstorms and heart attacks

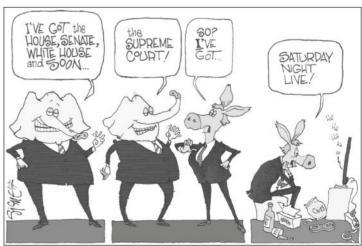
Big snowstorms may increase a man's risk for a fatal heart attack, reports Reuters .com. Canadian researchers examined records on about 130,000 hospital admissions in Quebec during the winters between 1981 and 2014, and compared them with weather reports over the same period. They found that men were up to 16 percent more likely to have a heart attack-and as much as 34 percent more likely to die from one—after a big snowstorm. The longer the storm and the more snow that fell, the greater their risk. Since there wasn't a similar uptick for women, the researchers speculate that the connection is probably linked to shoveling out snow. "It may be that men shovel more than women, particularly after heavy snowfalls," says study author Nathalie Auger, from the University of Montreal. "It is also possible that men put more effort into shoveling and have a tendency to overdo it." Frigid temperatures combined with the physical exertion required for shoveling can be dangerous, the study warns—particularly for those who are out of shape or who have preexisting heart conditions.











For more political cartoons, visit: www.theweek.com/cartoons.

ARTS

Review of reviews: Books

Book of the week

Why Time Flies: A Mostly **Scientific Investigation**

by Alan Burdick

(Simon & Schuster, \$28)

"It ticks away, neutrally, yet it also flies and collapses, and is more often lost than found," said The Economist. We all experience time, yet the greatest scientists and philosophers have struggled for centuries to pin down its precise nature. Alan Burdick, a New Yorker staff writer, accepts that he won't be the person to resolve time's mysteries, but he's pulled together "a thoughtful ramble" through the thickets, stopping along the way to let us hear from St. Augustine and William James, clockmakers and research psychologists. Time drags here and there when Burdick goes too deep on a puzzle such as "When is 'now'"? said Christopher Kemp in ScienceMag.com. But when he's visiting the Arctic to experience endless daylight, or chatting with scientists in Paris who keep time for the whole planet, the book zips along. "It is erudite and informative, a joy with many small treasures."



Time's true nature eludes even our best minds.

"From whatever side we address it, the nature of time is a source of perplexity and wonder," said Carlo Rovelli in The New York Times. Philosophers debate time's very existence, and physicists have discovered that if it does exist, it runs at different speeds under different conditions. Even time as we experience it can be a puzzle. Our brain, body, and cells, for example, all keep track of time in a variety of ways that

science doesn't fully understand. Muscle strength, blood pressure, and physical coordination all wax and wane across each 24-hour period, and the body's different internal clocks don't always appear to be on speaking terms. A transplanted kidney, for example, will sometimes demand bathroom breaks on the donor's schedule rather than the recipient's. And we haven't even begun to discuss the intersection of psychology and our experience of time.

The science in that area is notably shaky, said Sam Kean in The Wall Street Journal. At one point, Burdick describes a study showing that time seems to slow down for people looking at an elderly face rather than a younger one. But given how often researchers fail to replicate the results of psychological tests, a reader "can't help being skeptical." Still, there's much to learn from Burdick, a "playful, reflective" writer with a real talent for summing up long stretches of exploration with pithy oneliners. That said, the book's finest aperçu is arguably supplied by one of his young sons, who after watching Dad wrestle for years with the subject at hand, suggested the following title: Time Is Confusing.

Novel of the week **Autumn**

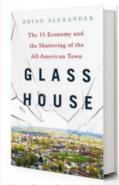
by Ali Smith

(Pantheon, \$25)

Ali Smith "has a beautiful mind," said Dwight Garner in The New York Times. Her latest novel is set in 2016, mostly in post-Brexit-vote England, and though the book was clearly written quickly, it's "unbearably moving in its playful, strange, soulful assessment of what it means to be alive at a somber time." We meet its protagonists, 32-year-old Elisabeth and Daniel, her 101-year-old ex-neighbor, as the latter is wasting away in a village nursing home. Elisabeth tells us she met Daniel when she was a child, and they bonded during long conversations about literature, art, and politics. Smith conveys all this with a fractured narrative that pings between realism and surrealism, said Sophie Gilbert in The Atlantic. Elisabeth takes a dim view of our moment, but there's an "irrepressible sense of joy that peeks out through the darkness," one born of friendship, art, and the author's inventiveness. If Autumn is a harbinger of the art our new, fraught era will produce, "the work that emerges over the next decade will be extraordinarily rich."

Glass House: The 1% Economy and the Shattering of the All-American Town

by Brian Alexander (St. Martin's, \$27)



Glass House is "more than another elegy for good times in Middle America," said Justin Fox in Bloomberg Businessweek. The story of one small town-Lancaster, Ohio-and how it has shed jobs and accumulated troubles since its midcentury

heyday, the book blames not amorphous economic forces but a particular intrusion of Wall Street sharks, whose pillaging of Lancaster's largest manufacturing firm has been repeated many times, in slightly different forms, in many other small American towns. You want to know why Middle America is suffering? In journalist Brian Alexander's telling, the answer is "pirate capitalists" like Carl Icahn and Stephen Feinberg, interlopers who slowly squeezed the life out of Lancaster glassmaker Anchor Hocking—all to enrich themselves.

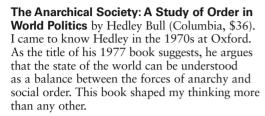
Alexander is a Lancaster native, and "the case he makes is damning," said Laura Miller in Slate.com. For many decades, the town was a model, home to glass-industry executives who drank beer with their line workers and sent their children to the same schools. Then Icahn bought up a chunk of Anchor shares, and "what followed was a long, complicated, and sickening ballet of financial sleight of hand." One firm after another bought Anchor with borrowed money, slashing the workforce or compensation each time a quick sale was required. The new out-of-town execs demanded huge tax concessions, sapping revenues for schools and other services. And none of this activity prevented two bankruptcy filings.

"There is an underlying irony to Alexander's narrative," said Len Boselovic in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. Lancaster, like many Midwestern towns, fell victim to a form of vulture capitalism unleashed by Reagan-era deregulation. But among the opiate addicts, harried politicians, and brokenhearted cops we meet, far too few have turned away from free-market ideology. In November, the county voted overwhelmingly for Donald Trump, who hopes to make both Icahn and Feinberg presidential advisers. A mood of despair and anger, it seems, is "not the basis of sound decisions."

The Book List

Best books...chosen by Richard Haass

Richard Haass is president of the Council on Foreign Relations and served in the administrations of Presidents Carter, Reagan, Bush, and Bush. His new book is A World in Disarray: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Old Order.



A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-22 by Henry Kissinger (Echo Point, \$22). Kissinger is the great scholar-practitioner of our age. His 1957 book, a history of the early 19th-century Congress of Vienna and its aftermath, began as his Harvard doctoral dissertation. It is filled with sharp character portraits as well as much general wisdom.

The Proud Tower: A Portrait of the World Before the War, 1890-1914 by Barbara W. Tuchman (Random House, \$18). Tuchman is one of the 20th century's most popular historians. I chose her 1966 book, a collection of eight essays on Europe's political and cultural landscape on the eve of World War I, because it hooked me on reading history.



The Quiet American by Graham Greene (Penguin, \$14). First published in 1955, just after the fall of colonial rule in Southeast Asia, this novel was prescient in suggesting why and how the United States would fail in Vietnam. Through reading it, I learned that good fiction has as much to teach as nonfiction.

Present at the Creation: My Years in the **State Department** by Dean Acheson (Norton, \$38). Acheson swore he'd never write about his time as Harry Truman's secretary of state, saying that it would inevitably turn into an exercise in self-justification. He broke his promise in 1969 with this excellent, Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir, which covers what is arguably the most creative period of modern American foreign policy.

Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for **Decision Makers** by Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May (Free Press, \$20). Written three decades ago by two of my former Harvard colleagues, this book draws lessons from America's successes and blunders on the world stage. It should be required reading for anyone thinking about or practicing foreign policy.

Author of the week

Frank Bruni

Frank Bruni has a plan to reunite America-but he's going to need some bread crumbs, said Vonnie Quinn in **Bloomberg.com**. The veteran New York Times columnist has teamed up with political reporter Jennifer Steinhauer



to create A Meatloaf in Every Oven, a compendium of 49 recipes for a dish that's long been an American

weekday dinner staple. Friends, relatives, colleagues, and celebrity chefs contributed personal takes, as did four prominent Washington political figures—two from each party. "Everybody has a favorite family recipe, and we realize politicians do, too," says Bruni. "It's a quintessential American dish that can bind a nation."

Don't expect that Bruni and Steinhauer discovered a bipartisan consensus on the perfect meatloaf recipe. House Speaker Paul Ryan, an enthusiastic deer hunter, contributed a venison version. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi worked with her 6-year-old granddaughter to develop a veal-and-bison loaf seasoned with fresh rosemary. And Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer found a way to combine chicken, beef, veal, and pork in a recipe Bruni has dubbed the Omnibus Loaf. (Far from bringing people together, that recipe sparked a small backlash from observant Jews in New York who were disappointed that their senator so boldly went nonkosher.) Bruni admits there's only so much his first cookbook can do to heal the nation's political rifts, "I don't think meatloaf can save the world," he recently told a Times colleague. "But I certainly think in the coming tomorrows there will be a healthier appetite for comfort."

Also of interest... in DIY culture

Citizen Science

by Caren Cooper (Overlook, \$29)



Biologist Caren Cooper "writes with the energy and enthusiasm of a crusader," said Deborah Blum in The Washington Post. In this engaging book, Cooper presents tale after tale of ordinary citizens pitching in

to help scientists gather data—about migration patterns, climate shifts, and more. She sees revolutionary potential in the movement, and though she might be overly optimistic about the future of citizen science projects, "she is an excellent advocate for today."

The Unsettlers

by Mark Sundeen (Riverhead, \$26)



Mark Sundeen's latest book is unsettling in ways he didn't intend, said Jon Christensen in the San Francisco Chronicle. A portrait of three American couples who've tried to build lives outside today's consumer culture,

The Unsettlers has been "slyly constructed" to lure readers down similar off-the-grid paths. But though Sundeen is a wry, nearly perfect guide, he doesn't recognize how his subjects, by framing their own acts of colonization as moral, are renewing a central myth of the culture they reject.

Stand Your Ground

by Caroline Light (Beacon, \$26)



The laws referred to in this book's title are "something of a red herring," said Peter Baker in Pacific Standard. Though the spread of "Stand Your Ground" statutes began just a decade ago, this "timely" history shows that

America has always had a twisted infatuation with lethal self-defense. Historian Caroline Light has read the case law, and she leaves no doubt that white men-and only white men-have consistently been forgiven and even celebrated for killing alleged attackers.

The Unbanking of America

by Lisa Servon (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$27)



Poor people who pay hefty fees to cash checks aren't necessarily mismanaging their money, said David Hugh Smith in CSMonitor.com. Lisa Servon has made a study of the more than one in four Americans who use

such services, and after working on the front lines has concluded that for many people, banks are a worse option, because of their punishing late fees and exploitative service practices. Servon identifies potential solutions, though, and "her compassion and intelligence light up every page."

ian Forrest, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, ©Vija Celmins/Courtesy Matthew Mark

Exhibit of the week

Jimmie Durham: At the Center of the World

UCLA Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, through May 7

The exile has finally come home, said Philippe Pirotte in Artforum. For the past three decades, the Arkansas-born artist and former Native American rights activist Iimmie Durham has lived abroad, in Mexico and then Europe, presenting his itinerancy as a political gesture. During that self-imposed banishment, Durham emerged as a major international art figure, contributing witty sculptural assemblages and installations—often made from bone, stone, wood, and other found objects-to major exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale and Germany's Documenta. Durham turned down all offers of solo shows in the U.S. for roughly 20 years. But he has now ended his boycott by allowing UCLA's Hammer Museum to mount a career retrospective that gathers some 200 sculptures, drawings, and other works. Together, they "wryly question the Western world's fantasies about indigenous Americans," while challenging virtually all forms of cultural categorization.

Durham, now 76, can at least be categorized as a lifelong outsider, said **Travis** Diehl in *The Guardian* (U.K.). Born in



Durham's The Cathedral of St. John the Divine (1989)

1940 in a Cherokee community, he worked as a political organizer for the American Indian Movement in the 1970s, lobbying the United Nations on behalf of native peoples. But by 1980, he had grown tired of infighting within the movement, and began focusing on poetry and art. Durham's earliest sculptures "stack up the stereotypes of Native American craft—beads, shells, turquoise, skulls, and skins—as if to give the colonialist rubes what they came for." But he was playing with those signifiers, affixing them to a police barrier in 1984's *Tlunh Datsi*, and to a discarded car part in 1985's *Bedia's Muffler*. He challenged racial pre-

sumptions again with 1985's On Loan From the Museum of the American Indian, an installation that featured such "artifacts" as an exotic dancer's feathered panties, which were labeled as having belonged to Pocahontas. After arriving in Europe in 1994, he began throwing jabs at the whole of Western art. His small, rickety Arc de Triomphe for Personal Use (1996) is decidedly unmonumental.

"The show's sprawling size is a bit of a drawback," said Christopher Knight in the *Los Angeles Times*. Two hundred works is too much, even for an expat artist who's rarely seen in American museums. "Still, it's a bracing event." *Something...Perhaps a Fugue or an Elegy*, from 2005, is

Durham's "unequivocal masterpiece," an obstacle course–style array of discarded electronics, seashells, and other objects. "Robert Rauschenberg's rebus-like assemblages come to mind." But so do William Harnett's still lifes from the 1870s, in which tabletops loaded with secondhand books, tattered violins, and animal carcasses pay homage to a world about to be modernized out of existence. Durham's collection of 21st-century detritus is just as powerful. As a new kind of "purposeful chaos" from Washington infects the world outside the gallery, "there could be no more impeccable a moment for this retrospective."

Where to buy

A select exhibition in a private gallery

To look closely at a work by Vija Celmins is to risk losing yourself in the vastness of the universe. The Latvian-born, New York—



Celmins' ocean waves

based painter has spent five decades painstakingly rendering star-filled skies and the surfaces of oceans and deserts. In Celmins' first gallery show in seven years—a warm-up to a major 2018 museum retrospective-those drawings and paintings share space with early photo-realistic images of commonplace objects like a comb or a space heater. Some of the astral paintings, like 2015-2017's Reverse Night Sky #4, resemble photo negatives, with black stars pinning a pale firmament whose subtle layers of color create the effect of a space that stretches to infinity. At Matthew Marks Gallery, 522 W. 22nd St., New York City, (212) 243-0200. Prices on request.

Della Robbia: Sculpting With Color in Renaissance Florence

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., through June 4

"Anyone who has visited Florence knows the della Robbia look," said Philip Kennicott in *The Washington Post*. Luca della Robbia (1400–1482) and his nephew Andrea (1435–1525) transformed terra-cotta clay into strikingly expressive statues, figurines, and reliefs characterized by their brilliant, opaque whites and rich, cerulean blues. The family continued the tradition for a continued the continued

rich, cerulean blues. The family continued the tradition for a century, deservedly enjoying great success. Why, then, do discussions of Renaissance masterworks so often exclude the della Robbias' glazed ceramics? Call it "the tchotchke effect": our quickness to associate these "often magisterial essays in the form" with kitschy antique-shop figurines. This exhibition strongly challenges that bias by displaying the full range of the family's achievement, highlighted by one major sculpture

A della Robbia roundel

that's "a masterpiece by any definition."

"Luca has always been regarded as the genius of the family," said Sebastian Smee in *The Boston Globe*. In

1437, having already won acclaim for work in marble, he decided to experiment with terra-cotta when he was commissioned to fill a doorway arch at Florence's great domed cathedral. His innovations worked brilliantly, and several years later he produced his crowning achievement in *The Visitation*, a moving life-size depiction of the pregnant Mary greeting her

cousin Elizabeth. That and other products of the della Robbia workshop have proved remarkably durable, said Bruce Cole in *The Wall Street Journal*. Luca's secret glazing method, which was passed on through the family, created a weather-resistant surface that ensured that the whites, blues, greens, and golds we see today are exactly what the artists intended. The same can't be said of most Renaissance paintings or frescos, and "that alone merits a visit."

THE WEEK March 3, 2017

Oscar night 2017: Black actors get their due

If you tune in to Hollywood's big night this year, you'll find that "the Oscars are not so white," said Andrea Mandell in USA Today. That'll represent a welcome shift from 2015 and 2016, when the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences didn't nominate a single actor of color. Critics launched the Twitter campaign #OscarsSoWhite, and the complaints spurred the academy to shed older voters and admit more women and nonwhite members. Results came quickly. Though viewers of the Feb. 26 broadcast may note "a glaring lack of Hispanic or Asian nominees," this year's list of contenders is the most diverse in a decade, with a record six black actors

up for lead or supporting honors. There's even a chance that *Moonlight* or *Hidden Figures*, two movies focused on black life, could upset the musical *La La Land* and nab Best Picture.



Hidden's Taraji Henson

Despite the progress made on recognizing non-white talent in the industry, "little has changed for women," said Nicole Sperling in *Entertainment Weekly*. For the seventh straight year, no female directors were nominated. And though nine of the 30 producers contending in the Best Picture category are women, 80 percent of the nominees in all nonacting categories are men. Whoever wins Sunday night, dissent is certain to remain a major part of the event, said Julie Hinds in the *Detroit Free Press*. Given how many stars have already used their awards-season victories to slam the politics of the Trump presidency, one potential viewer in the White House has to be

expecting quite a few winners to mention him in their acceptance speeches. "If Trump and the Oscars could agree on anything, it might be that winners have certain prerogatives."

My Life as a Zucchini

Directed by Claude Barras (PG-13)



A parentless boy puts down roots.

Orphans always make great protagonists, and "if there's anything right with this world," this stop-action marvel of a movie "will be remembered as a great entry in the orphan canon," said **Stephanie Zacharek** in *Time*. Its hero is a shy boy who insists on being called Zucchini. When he's sent to a group home, he must

endure a bully's attentions and sort out how to handle a first crush, and each scene is "so warm, so alive, that we forget we're watching cartoon figures." A French-Swiss production now contending for two Oscars, *Zucchini* is "never afraid to be cute, but more importantly, it's committed to



Team urchin goes sledding.

being real," said Peter Debruge in Variety. We eventually learn that Zucchini accidentally killed his mother during one of her drunken rages, and that his friend witnessed her parents' murder-suicide. "This is not the stuff of which kids' movies are typically made," but the screenplay "deals frankly with the facts of life in a way that nei-

ther condescends to nor scars younger audiences." If the movie has a weakness, it's that the visuals don't demand a cinema, said **Boyd van Hoeij** in *The Hollywood Reporter*. Even on a home screen, it's a "vividly realized, finger-on-the-pulse" look at youthful growing pains, and how to get past them.

A Cure for Wellness

Directed by Gore Verbinski



A gothic Swiss spa turns into a trap.

"I don't usually spend much time thinking about eels, but *A Cure for Wellness* gave me no choice," said **A.O. Scott** in *The New York Times*. When an ambitious young Wall Streeter is sent to a Swiss wellness center to retrieve his firm's CEO, dark secrets begin piling up almost instantly, beginning with the eels that slither up

from an aquifer into the spa's toilets and bathtubs. Made by the director of *The Ring*, *A Cure for Wellness* attains "an exuberant gothic creepiness," though two-plus hours "may be more of this kind of fun than a body can stand." And maybe I'm



Panicky patient Dane DeHaan

missing something, "but aren't good horror films supposed to be scary fun?" asked Joe Morgenstern in *The Wall Street Journal*. Slow to the point of ponderousness, *Wellness* leaves you with no one and nothing to care about—"unless you're into dental torment, octogenarian nude scenes, or steampunk instruments of outlandish tor-

ture." I watched the last half hour "with my hands clasped over my slightly agape mouth," said Alissa Wilkinson in Vox.com. Walking out of the theater, you will surely want to turn to a friend and say, "What the hell did we just see?"

New on DVD and Blu-ray

Manchester by the Sea

(Lionsgate, \$30)

Win or lose on Oscar night, Kenneth Lonergan's masterful study of grief is "not to be missed," said the Phoenix *Arizona Republic*. Casey Affleck "couldn't be better" as a broken man forced to confront the cause of his pain when he's called on to become the guardian of his teenage nephew.

Arrival

(Paramount, \$30)

Last year's best sci-fi drama "singlehandedly makes up for every bad alienscoming-to-Earth film you've ever seen," said *USA Today*. Amy Adams, in one of the best performances of her career, plays a linguist recruited by the U.S. military to communicate with mysterious outsiders.

Moonlight

(Lionsgate, \$15)

Barry Jenkins' film should be this year's Oscar winner, said the Los Angeles Times. A triptych portrait, it follows its protagonist from a hard Miami youth to adulthood as a gay black man. Moonlight "grants him nothing but the full measure of his humanity; miraculously, that's enough." (Feb. 28)

Evening at the Talk House

Pershing Square Signature Center, New York City, (212) 244-3380 ★★★



Broderick and Shawn: Peers no more

Wallace Shawn's new play arrives at the moment when his gloomy vision is most needed, said Jesse Green in New York magazine. In The Designated Mourner and other previous works, the actor-playwright has presented dystopian versions of today's society in which we all cravenly abet totalitarianism. Though those older Shaw scenarios sometimes came across as overly alarmist, Evening at the Talk House is "perhaps his most perfect alarm": Its premise asks only that we imagine a near future in which theater has been shoved aside by crasser entertainments and even struggling actors are employed at least part-time performing ethically questionable national security work. It's also not hard to accept

that the cast and crew of a past production might gather for a 10th-anniversary celebration at a cozy, once fashionable club. Among them is the fictitious show's writer, played by Matthew Broderick, and as the characters reminisce the audience is invited to partake of drinks and snacks. "What could go wrong amid such warmth?"

Plenty, it turns out, said Ben Brantley in The New York Times. The characters regularly ask one another whatever happened to some old acquaintance, and "the answers tend to be dire"-poisoning, hanging, and so on. In this new normal, such stories are related almost casually, as a part of routine gossip. Unfortunately, the juxtaposition of superficial stage-world chatter with dark manifestations of institutionalized evil "can feel forced and gimmicky." Because we aren't asked to identify with any one character in particular, the play's "grim, all-implicating ironies" also don't cut as deeply as they might have. Still, Shawn is strong playing a resentful victim of the new order, and Broderick is "first-rate" as a shy, soft-spoken man with a genius for self-preservation. If nothing else, Talk House "provides plenty of bitter food for thought."

On other stages...

Bootycandy

Windy City Playhouse, Chicago, (312) 891-8985

It's rare to encounter a work that "speaks so defiantly in its own voice," said Alex Huntsberger in **NewCityStage** .com. Robert



Turner: A long fuse

O'Hara's semi-autobiographical play about a young, gay African-American man unfolds as a series of ribald comic sketches involving preachers, relatives, Brooklyn hipsters, and more than a little male nudity. The result is a "scatterbrained" bildungsroman "so raunchy, filthy, and unabashed that it might be offensive if it weren't so whip smart." The show "takes a while to ignite"—but when it does, watch out, said Chris Jones in the Chicago Tribune. Travis Turner is effectively sardonic as O'Hara's alter ego, a character who moves from quiet acceptance of his lot to purposeful rage. O'Hara, a chronically underappreciated playwright, displays a wit that invites comparison with Richard Pryor, In Living Color, and early Eddie Murphy. But really, Bootycandy "makes 'em all look like wimps."

Alison Krauss Windy City



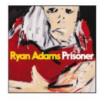


With the 2017 Grammys only just behind us, "next year's front-runner has already arrived," said Glenn Gamboa in Newsday. Alison Krauss' first solo album

in 18 years will be the record to beat for Album of the Year: A collection of covers from a bluegrass/Americana star who already owns 27 Grammys, Windy City injects new life into 10 country songs associated with past greats, offering fresh readings on such standouts as Glen Campbell's "Gentle on My Mind," Ray Charles' "You Don't Know Me," and Roger Miller's "River in the Rain." But don't get the album's intentions wrong, said Robert Ham in ConsequenceOfSound.net. "Any fears about Krauss aiming for arena-size sales numbers are quickly wiped away upon the first spin through Windy City." Though Campbell's song was a big 1968 hit, "this is a record of Krauss' personal favorites and deep cuts that molded her sensibility as a performer and songwriter." None play to the cheap seats; almost all of them "look back to country's sorrowful, heartbroken roots."

Rvan Adams Prisoner





Prisoner isn't merely a heartbreak record-"it's potentially the heartbreak record," said Joe Goggins in DrownedInSound.com. Sometime in the twoplus years since the

collapse of his marriage to Mandy Moore, Ryan Adams poured his grief into recording a clutch of new songs, and for the first time in quite a while, the 42-year-old has delivered "a real sit-up-and-listen statement." He's unusually restrained, musically and emotionally. These are 12 "profoundly sad" songs set against minimal but "consistently pretty" instrumentation that leans heavily on acoustic guitar. But after a "stirring" half-dozen tracks, the album "treads into less affecting territory," said Patrick Ryan in USA Today. Adams wallows in his pain too long without revealing enough about what went wrong in his marriage. He still has some strong moments left, though, including the guitar ballad "Breakdown" and album closer "We Disappear," in which he offers a pained bid for closure: "You deserve a future," he sings, "and you know I'll never change."

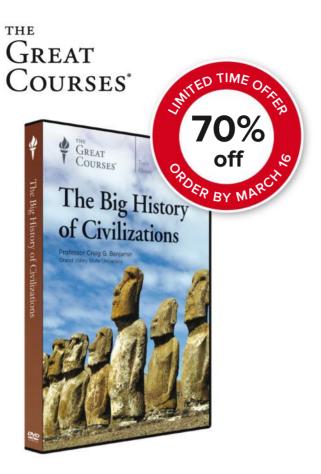
Tinariwen Elwan





Even political exile and a kidnapping "have somehow failed to dim the spirit of Tinariwen," said Timothy Monger in AllMusic.com. The Grammy-winning band, whose dis-

tinctive desert blues music weds West African traditions with electric guitars, fled Mali after militant Islamists seized power in 2012, banned popular music, and briefly abducted one member of the band when he was trying to retrieve his guitars. Recorded in France, Morocco, and California, the group's seventh album is "a work of subtle power," driven by "the distilled, fine-tuned engine of Tinariwen's percussive core." It's perhaps the group's most powerful album since 2004's Amassakoul, said Andy Gill in The Independent (U.K.). Hand drums and shakers add "an urgent, peppery depth" to songs in which bandleader Ibrahim Ag Alhabib and his mates "confront their situation head-on." As usual, the inimitable energy in these songs derives mainly from "infectiously hypnotic cyclical guitar grooves that wind like creepers around their poetic imagery."



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- 28. Agrarian Civilizations of Mesoamerica
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- 30. African Kingdoms and Trade
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Television

Movies on TV

Monday, Feb. 27 To Be or Not to Be

Jack Benny, Carole Lombard, and Robert Stack star in a powerful comedy about a Polish acting troupe that dupes the occupying Nazis. (1942)

Tuesday, Feb. 28

8 p.m., TCM

Seven Years in Tibet

Brad Pitt plays a real-life Austrian mountaineer who escapes a 1940s prisoner-of-war camp in the Himalayas and finds his way into the Dalai Lama's good graces. (1997) 5:40 p.m., Movieplex

Wednesday, March 1

In America

An immigrant Irish family struggles with poverty in 1980s New York City. With Samantha Morton, Paddy Considine, and Djimon Hounsou. (2003) 6:10 p.m., Cinemax

Thursday, March 2

Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?

Ahead of the new FX series about Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, check out the two divas in the horror flick that pushed their feud to an apex. (1962) 11 p.m., TCM

Friday, March 3

Coffee and Cigarettes

Director Jim Jarmusch puts together a series of playful vignettes, featuring Bill Murray in conversation with the Wu-Tang Clan, and lggy Pop trading quips with Tom Waits. (2003) 8 p.m., the Movie Channel

Saturday, March 4 Family Plot

Alfred Hitchcock's final film tells a darkly comic tale about a scam psychic's

attempt to find a missing heir. Bruce Dern and Barbara Harris co-star. (1976) 10:15 p.m., TCM

Sunday, March 5

Smokey and the Bandit

Burt Reynolds, Jackie Gleason, and a Trans Am star in a car-chase comedy about beer smugglers. (1977) 9 p.m., Sundance

The Week's guide to what's worth watching

Africa's Great Civilizations

Too easily we forget that the history of Africa is very nearly the history of humanity. In this three-part, six-hour documentary, host Henry Louis Gates Jr. undertakes a 200,000-year survey, beginning with the origins of *Homo sapiens* in east Africa and the rise of the great ancient Nile Valley civilizations. The Tuesday and Wednesday episodes will further explore Africa's role in the development of language, agriculture, science, and religion—as Gates journeys from the 4th-century Kush city of Meroe to the unique monolithic stone churches of Lalibela. *Begins Monday, Feb. 27, at 9 p.m.*, *PBS*; *check local listings*

When We Rise

Could this four-night miniseries be the *Roots* of the gay rights movement? Guy Pearce, Mary-Louise Parker, and Rachel Griffiths (*Six Feet Under*) headline an impressive cast assembled to share five decades of that history by weaving together the stories of several LGBT activists. Pearce plays Cleve Jones, a Midwest native who became a protégé of San Francisco icon Harvey Milk and later created the first panel of the great AIDS memorial quilt. *Begins Monday*, *Feb. 27*, *at 9 p.m.*, *ABC*

Tickled

A documentary about "Competitive Endurance Tickling" ought to be an amusing diversion. And that's the kind of film that journalist David Farrier thought he'd be making when he started trying to find the people behind a slew of online videos of young men testing their ability to endure extended tickling sessions. But the hunt took a turn almost instantly, and Farrier wound up uncovering a dark, international subculture from which participants could find no escape. *Monday, Feb. 27, at 10 p.m., HBO*

A Presidential Address to Congress

Only a president with a year or more in office officially can deliver the State of the Union. But the trappings will be familiar as Donald Trump shares his thoughts on where we've been and where in the world we're going. *Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 9 p.m., various networks*



Africa's Great Civilizations: Visiting ruins in Sudan

National Treasure

Scottish actor Robbie Coltrane has long and admirably toiled as a character actor. In this powerful drama, he delivers a career performance playing Paul Finchley, an avuncular British comedian whose celebrated career is upended by a string of rape accusations. Julie Walters is equally good as Paul's compliant wife. *Available for streaming Wednesday, March 1, Hulu*

Other highlights

Code of a Killer

This two-part British series dramatizes a 1980s homicide investigation that became the first solved through DNA fingerprinting. It makes for a suspenseful, atmospheric forensics history lesson. *Available for streaming Monday, Feb. 27*, *AcornTV*

The Obama Years: The Power of Words

Love him or loathe him, Barack Obama knew a thing or two about oration. Historians and others take an in-depth look at six of our 44th president's key speeches. *Monday, Feb. 27, at 8 p.m., Smithsonian Channel*

Little Big Shots

Imagine a cross between *Kids Say the Darndest Things* and *The Voice* and you get this talent show hosted by Steve Harvey and produced by Harvey and Ellen DeGeneres. *Sunday, March 5*, at 8 p.m., NBC

Sarandon and Lange get frosty.

Show of the week Feud: Bette and Joan

In the hierarchy of Hollywood feuds, Bette Davis versus Joan Crawford is Ali-Frazier. From a mid-1930s romantic rivalry through their tumultuous pairing in 1962's Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?, the two stars reveled in their mutual disdain. (Davis once quipped that her rival "slept with every male star at MGM except Lassie"; Crawford retorted that Davis had "never had a happy day, or night, in her life.") With Susan Sarandon as Davis and Jessica Lange as Crawford, this limited series turns the catfight into appointment television. Begins Sunday, March 5, at 10 p.m., FX

Food & Drink

Critics' choice: Dinner at the butcher shop

Gwen Los Angeles

The butcher counter at Gwen "could double as a museum for steaks," said Ionathan Gold in the Los Angeles Times. Beautifully marbled tomahawks from Kansas, rare rib-eye caps from Napathere's nothing in L.A. quite like this lavish display. Advancing past it, you enter an elegant dining room that, with its prim booths and art deco light fixtures, "looks as if it could have been plucked out of a white-telephone drama from the 1930s." There's a large fire pit at the far end where chefs are tossing chunks of flesh on a grill, though, and the restaurant's \$95 tasting menu makes good use of that fire. After a charcuterie course, the salad and chestnut-stuffed agnolotti go quickly before more meat arrives: a composed plate of pork belly, a nice rib chop, and more. You'll never stop wanting a steak, though, and steak costs extra—up to \$185 for a marvelous 12-ounce New York strip. If your bank account hasn't been drained, you might stop at the counter on the way out to buy a rack of wild venison. I did, and it was "the most profound thing I've ever eaten." 6600 Sunset Blvd., (323) 946-7513

The Butcher's Table Seattle

You know you've found a promising steak house when a porterhouse arrives at the next table and the diners who are about to



The meat counter at White Gold Butchers

share it "register looks of joy usually associated with beholding a firstborn child," said Providence Cicero in The Seattle Times. One story up, at street level, The Butcher's Table is part meat shop, part raw bar, part lunch counter, and part boisterous cocktail barand not all of those elements cohere. But in the quiet, amber-lit dining room one floor below, the restaurant delivers beautifully on its mission of showcasing American wagyu from Mishima Reserve, a Washington-based brand. The \$70 tasting flight—three grades of New York strip—"offers an excellent introduction to Wagyu's charms." Mishima Reserve's beef cows, bred from Angus cows and Black Wagyu bulls, are pasture-raised, then grain- and grass-fed for 400 days, pro-

ducing marbling that exceeds USDA prime. You can opt for an "impossibly tender" \$80 rib-eye cap, but even the \$30 steaks are magnificent, all preseasoned with a proprietary spice blend and cooked over mesquite. 2121 Westlake Ave., (206) 209-5990

White Gold Butchers New York City Manhattan's Upper West Side finally has a new dinner spot worth at least a crosstown trip, said Pete Wells in The New York Times. Four-month-old White Gold is merely a spare little restaurant inside a brightly lit butcher shop. But it's an April Bloomfield-Ken Friedman operation, and "in its modest way, it's memorable." Few chefs are better with meat than Bloomfield, and the two young butchers who run White Gold have been tutored well. Their dinner menu typically runs just four entrées long. The beef carpaccio is perhaps the best in New York—lush sheets of raw beef topped with mushroom, pickled broccoli stems, and grated horseradish. On another night, the highlight might be pork shoulder slow-cooked in milk or beef heart with roasted carrots. No side is better than White Gold's "crispy layered potato"three cubes of thin-sliced potato fried golden in beef fat. It sounds like no big deal, but believe me, "this is a significant advance in the field of applied potato physics." 375 Amsterdam Ave., (212) 362-8731

Recipe of the week

When it's late winter and fresh vegetables are scarce, said Emily Horton in The Washington Post, it's time to focus on "one of the most common yet underestimated ingredients of everyday cooking." Onions are amazing, and in this pasta recipe, caramelized red onions co-star with fennel and olives, adding "jammy, bittersweet" depth to a dish that's rich in big flavors.

Pasta with caramelized onions, fennel, and olives

1 cup fresh plain bread crumbs • extra-virgin olive oil • 11/4 lbs red onions • 1/2 tsp sea salt • 2 cloves garlic, smashed, then finely chopped • 1 tsp minced fresh rosemary leaves • ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes • ½ tsp fennel seed • ¼ cup small black olives, pitted and sliced • 10 oz penne rigate, shells, or gnocchette

• Heat oven to 375. Toss bread crumbs

with 2 tsp olive oil. Spread on a baking sheet. Bake until dark golden, about 15 minutes. Let cool.

- Halve onions, top to bottom, then cut halves lengthwise into thin slices.
- Heat a large heavy sauté pan over medium heat. Add 21/2 tbsp olive oil. Stir in on-

ions and ½ tsp salt. Cook onions, stirring minimally, until browned and crisped at the edges, 20 to 30 minutes. Add garlic, rosemary, pepper flakes, and fennel

seed; cook 5 minutes. Stir in olives.

Reduce heat to low. Bring a large pot of salted

water to a boil. Cook pasta until al dente. Drain, reserving ½ cup cooking water. Return pasta to the pot. Add 2 tbsp pasta cooking water to the pan with onions. Dislodge browned bits, then pour into pasta pot along

with remaining pasta water and 1 tsp oil. Stir until liquid is nearly absorbed. Divide among bowls and sprinkle with toasted bread crumbs. Serves 4.

Wine: The 2015 Burgundies

Great red Burgundy always fetches skyhigh prices, and the 2015 vintage was "the best in decades," said Elin McCoy in Bloomberg.com. If you want in at \$100 a bottle or less, now is the time to find a retailer who sells Burgundy futures. Even 2015's regional and villagelevel reds are consistently delicious, with "cashmere-like texture" and a juicy acidity that "makes you want to take another sip, and then another."

2015 Faiveley Mercurey Rouge (\$30). This village-level wine "overperforms for the price," offering earth and mineral aromas and "a bright cherry deliciousness."

2015 Comte Armand Auxey-Duresses Premier Cru (\$68). This "silky, smoky" wine gives off sensual aromas and tastes of black cherry. 2015 Michel Lafarge Volnay Vendanges Selectionées (\$78). "This village wine is a stunner, built to age." It combines cherry and rose aromas, a chalky minerality, and a generous dose of red plum.



Travel

This week's dream...Helicopter skiing in British Columbia

"Skiing powder is as close as you can get to flying," said Rachel Walker in The Washington Post. And when you're helicopter skiing, with a chopper close at hand to ferry you to the most pristine slopes, there's an unlimited supply of the finest powder imaginable. In early January, I ventured into the mountains of British Columbia with CMH Heli-Skiing, the oldest helicopter-skiing operation in the world. CMH holds exclusive permits to fly skiers into 3 million acres of backcountry just west of Banff. Visitors are grouped according to skill level, and you stay in one of

13 luxury lodges scattered about the 3 million acres, spending your days zipping up and down the mountains, with seasoned pros to guide you. Just the thought of it had me "champing at the bit."

I feel as if airborne while darting between giant spruce trees, engulfed in swirling



Skiers at a drop-off point survey the view.

powder. Flying off a small cliff that appears in front of me, I land elated. A short chopper trip later, I'm off on another perfect run: starting at the charred remnants of a forest fire and ending in a snowy rock garden. A bitter cold front has settled in, reducing the risk of avalanche, so our guides fly us right to the summits of the

highest mountains. We schuss down "steep, open bowls" and through narrow chutes into oldgrowth forests. We start each day early, but it's worth it: "There are few sights that can compare to sunrise from a pristine peak in the heart of a massive western range."

Of course, I fully expected the sublime skiing and vistas at CMH. "What surprised me were the connections I made." Though people often arrange to heli-ski with friends, some friends could be put off by the cost, and there's always a chance your group will be split up

anyway. I made the trip solo, and it was a blessing in disguise. After the breathtaking runs, the shared bottles of wine, and the Ping-Pong tournaments in the lodge's game room, "I left with new friends from all over the world."

Seven-day trips with CMH (canadian mountainholidays.com) start at \$4,700.

Hotel of the week



A blast of the imperial past

Ten Trinity Square London

Though already a century old, Ten Trinity Square feels again like "a gift to London," said Simon Usborne in the Financial Times. Once a port authority headquarters, this overlooked landmark near the Tower of London has been scrubbed clean and converted into luxury apartments, a private club, and a top-notch hotel. Some updates don't work: The main rotunda brings to mind a cruise liner. But with its impressively appointed guest rooms and "breathtaking" original details, Ten Trinity is a fine addition to a district rich in history but short on five-star accommodations.

fourseasons.com/tentrinity:

Getting the flavor of...

The badlands in bloom

In the deserts of the Southwest, wildflowers can be "extra fickle, but also extra fabulous," said Angela Hill in the San Jose Mercury News. Last year, a spectacular springtime superbloom made national news when it turned Death Valley gold, purple, pink, and white. While such "wild, splashy parties" are rare, less florid seasons can still bring bright swaths of color to stark desert landscapes. This year, Death Valley park rangers are expecting the most blooms between mid-February and mid-March; "you might see some golden evening primrose, Bigelow monkey flower, or desert fivespot." Further south, in the Mojave Desert, the Antelope Valley grasslands are filled with poppies, lupine, goldfield, and more. Nearby lies another unlikely floral delight: Amboy Crater, a 250-foot volcanic cinder cone that was used to test Mars rovers. The cone is "pretty cool in itself," and in springtime "the rugged terrain is often softened by desert-sand verbena and desert sunflowers."

Leonard Cohen's Montreal

Everyone has a Leonard Cohen story in Montreal's Little Portugal, said Rose Maura Lorre in The New York Times. Whenever he returned to his hometown, the famed songwriter-poet stayed in his modest townhouse in the neighborhood and patronized a string of family-owned businesses on Boulevard St.-Laurent, Recently, I visited each of those places to savor his Montreal. Cohen began his days with a tall espresso at Bagel Etc., a small café with an "appealingly scattershot" breakfast menu and decor to match. Up the street sits J. Schreter, where Cohen bought the Foamtreads slippers he often wore around town. Other haunts included Les Anges Gourmets, known for its Portuguese custard tarts, and the "scruffy" Main Deli Steak House, where Cohen indulged his love for Montreal's acclaimed smoked meat. At his favorite restaurant, Moishes steak house, Cohen always made the same corny joke: "I'll have an order of the Silence of the Lamb chops."

Last-minute travel deals

Whale watching

During March, which is peak whale-watching season along Mexico's Riviera Nayarit, the St. Regis Punta Mita is offering a special two-night package that includes daily breakfast and a humpback-encounter boat trip. Doubles start at \$800. stregis.com

Panama Canal cruise

Explore the Panama Canal by sea and save \$2,000 per couple. For its March 28 and April 4 cruises, Overseas Adventure Travel has cut the price of its main-deck cabin rooms to as low as \$2,495 per person, double occupancy. oattravel.com

Savings in Seattle

To celebrate Washington State's 20th annual wine and food festival, the Kimpton Hotel Vintage in Seattle is offering 20 percent off in March, plus a free bottle of wine and nightly hosted wine tours. Doubles start at \$152. Book by March 28. kimptonhotels.com

doubles from \$430

The Porsche 911 Carrera GTS: What the critics say

Autoweek

"Imagine Porsche engineers getting together to assemble their ideal 911 and you have an idea of what the GTS consists of." Though it's not quite as fast as the 540-hp 911 Turbo, this is "a sort of Goldilocks 911," with sharper reflexes than its \$160,000 sibling and 80 more horses than the baseline Carrera, the iconic sports car last overhauled a year ago. A performance variant of that "already brilliant" vehicle, the GTS "does many things a little bit better," without sacrificing everyday drivability.

Jalopnik.com

Sure, you could get most GTS goodies

as options on other 911s, but "saying this thing is just a parts-bin special is like saying an F-22 is just an airplane." Thanks to its active suspension, larger turbochargers, and other tweaks, the GTS can rule the track most any day. It's "a supercar-slayer you can live with," and most every aspect of it "makes you want to push harder and go faster."

Car and Driver

Choosing between transmissions isn't easy. The GTS is quickest with a dual-clutch automatic, but the seven-speed manual "feels altogether crisper than before," nearly as good as Porsche's old six-speed. No



A 'Goldilocks' 911, from \$120,050

matter which GTS you choose—convertible included—"we can assure you that each one delivers a driving experience among the greatest available anywhere."

The best of...all-day pajama style



H&M Patterned Kimono

A well-chosen robe might be the easiest way to make the pajamas-aseveningwear trend your own. If you ever pair a black top with simple black pants, this affordable kimono is "100 percent applicable to your everyday style." \$80, hm.com Source: Elle.com

PJ Harlow Jolie Satin Pant

Here is loungewear that any woman can wear with confidence all day. The cut is flattering, and the silk-like material "adds the requisite hint of polish." Pull on a sweater and "you can even answer the door without shame." \$59, amazon.com Source: NYMag.com



F.R.S. Armonia Silk-Twill Jacket

A big step up, this silk jacket comes from an Italian brand whose initials signify "for restless sleepers" and whose fabrics, patterns, and rich colors "call to mind life in a Medici palazzo." It pairs well with a cropped pant. \$935, netaporter.com Source: Washington Post



Sleepy Jones Marina Shirtdress

Co-founded by Andy Spade, Sleepy Jones specializes in nightwear that could double as a daily uniform. This piece's crisp lines and bold hue will have you "looking like a character straight out of a Wes Anderson movie."

\$248, sleepyjones.com Source: Racked.com



Fleur d**u Mal** Pajama Jumpsuit

Fleur du Mal pajamas are created to be worn as street fashion—with the structure and lining you expect from highend attire. This easy silk jumpsuit asks only one thing of you, and that's to accessorize.

\$595, fwrd.com Source: Glamour.com

Tip of the week... Label buzzwords deciphered

- 'Natural' isn't a term defined by the FDA, and it "doesn't necessarily mean anything about the purity of a product." If your aim is to avoid chemicals, simply read the ingredients list—and beware unfamiliar words.
- 'Organic' can be used on a product provided it consists of at least 95 percent organically produced ingredients. Whatever's not organic will be a USDA-approved substance, too.
- 'Vegan' is not a federally regulated label, but it indicates an absence of animal products or byproducts—like beeswax. "Cruelty-free" usually equates to zero animal testing.
- 'Gluten-free' foods are regulated by the FDA, but gluten-free cosmetics aren't. That's rarely a worry, unless you're gluten-sensitive and shopping for lip products.
- 'Fair Trade' products come from farms that meet strict social, environmental, economic, and safety standards. Also, the manufacturer must invest in the farms' communities.

 Source: O Magazine

And for those who have everything...

Tired of stumbling off curbs or bumping into other pedestrians while consulting a map on your smartphone? When you wear **Lechal Insoles**, a gentle vibration in one shoe or the other will tell you when and in which direction to turn. Just enter your destination into Lechal's GPS app, and let your phone do the navigating. The batteries for the vibrating pads last about 15 days on a charge. Besides steering you from place to place, the insoles can also act as activity trackers, monitoring distances traveled, steps taken, calories burned, and more. \$150, amazon.com

Source: DudelWantThat.com



Best apps...

For saving money effortlessly

- Acoms rounds up to the next dollar the cost of every non-cash purchase you make, saving the extra pennies in an account that can easily be invested in stocks and bonds. You can also set up recurring deposits to, say, set aside \$20 a week.
- Stash also makes it easy to automatically save in tiny increments, but has no rounding function. It offers investment tutorials, packages investment options, and also predicts long-term balances based on your habits.
- Qapital isn't the easiest app to use, but it does all the things Acorns does and more. You can, for example, create a savings goal and pull friends or family members into saving toward it, whether for a getaway trip or a child's tuition.
- Digit monitors your bank balances and, following the guidelines you set, quietly transfers a small sum into savings each day based on how much spending you have available.

 Source: Gizmodo.com

Best properties on the market

This week: Homes in Seattle

► Lawton Wood At the edge of Discovery Park, this four-bedroom house lies on nearly an acre of gardens and mature trees. The 1919 home's craftsman-style woodwork. built-ins, and trim come from reclaimed wood and local materials. The main living room has a vaulted ceiling, a fireplace, and hardwood floors. A finished tree house for guests overlooks the outdoor pool, which is thought to be the oldest residential pool in Seattle. \$4,950,000. Moira Holley, Realogics Sotheby's International Realty, (206) 660-4787







◀The Highlands Chapel Lane Estate, an 11,000-square-foot example of Colonial Revivalism, sits on 4.5 acres of gardens among old-growth forest. Built in 1927, the eight-bedroom home has been renovated with marble slab bathrooms, a Sub-Zero refrigerator, and detailed wood flooring, cabinetry, and plasterwork. The property includes lawns, gardens, and views of Puget Sound. \$4,800,000. Mary Norris and Lisa Woolverton, Realogics Sotheby's International Realty, (206) 713-2151

▶ Belltown A modern condo in the Mosler Lofts building, this two-bedroom downtown unit has 12-foot ceilings and walls of windows with city, mountain, and Puget Sound views. The open layout includes concrete pillars, exposed ducts, bamboo floors, and raw steel framing. The main living space leads to a concrete deck. \$1,900,000. Michael Doyle, Windermere Real Estate Midtown, (206) 669-0203





Best properties on the market





Washington

Seattle

■ Magnolia This contemporary four-bedroom house offers Puget Sound and mountain views.

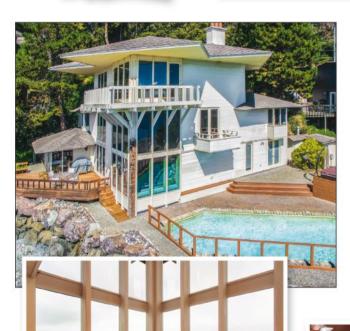
Details include an openconcept living area, a fireplace, timborana wood floors, a gym, and a master bedroom with a balcony and a spa bathroom. The out-

door space features a rooftop lounge with a cabana. \$2,595,000. Heidi Ward, Windermere Real Estate, (206) 419-4285





▲ Sunset Hill This modern fourbedroom home has floor-to-ceiling windows with views of Puget Sound. The open-concept space features high ceilings, hardwood floors, quartz kitchen counters, and a master suite with a fireplace. A wraparound balcony provides water views, and the roof is outfitted with an array of solar panels. \$1,995,000. Tere Foster, Team Foster @ Avenue Properties, (206) 200-8373



◀ Arroyo Set on a Puget Sound beach, this house was built in 1962 by architect Ralph Anderson. With floor-to-ceiling windows looking onto the water and mountains, the great room has a vaulted ceiling and walls paneled in red cedar. The exterior features decks, a pool, a hot tub, and 100 feet of waterfront. \$2,500,000. J. Daniel Bray, Coldwell Banker Danforth, (206) 459-4486



▲ East Queen Anne Named Seaweed, this houseboat floats on Lake Union. Built in 2000, the one-bedroom, wood-and-fiberglass home is 33 feet by 12 feet. There's a full kitchen, a bathroom with a jet tub, a washerdryer combo, and custom built-in cabinetry. \$325,000. Linda and Kevin Bagley, Special Agents Realty, (206) 915-3766

BUSINESS

The news at a glance

The bottom line

- Some 76 percent of U.S. midmarket executives think the new White House will have a positive impact on their bottom line, according to a JPMorgan Chase survey.
- Virtually all smartphones sold in the last three months of 2016 were Android or iOS devices. Windows Phone claimed 0.3 percent of the global market. BlackBerry, which sold just over 200,000 devices, has a market share of 0.0 percent, essentially a rounding error. TheVerge.com
- Shares in the New York Times Co. have climbed 42 percent since President Trump's election, outperforming Goldman Sachs. The Times added 276,000 new subscribers in the fourth guarter of 2016. The Economist



- Heat waves across the Mediterranean have ravaged the region's olive crops, causing the price of extra-virgin olive oil to jump 30 percent in Italy, 10 percent in Spain, and 17 percent in Greece. The strong dollar has so far mostly insulated American consumers against the price rise. The Washington Post
- The U.S. Court of International Trade has ruled that Snuggies are blankets, not clothes. Snuggie-maker Allstar Marketing Group has spent six years battling the government over its designation of their wearable polvester blankets as clothes; blankets are subject to an 8.5 percent import duty, as opposed to 14.9 percent for pullover apparel. Oz.com

South Korea: Samsung heir arrested

Samsung is in turmoil after South Korean officials arrested the company's "heir apparent" on corruption charges, said Matt Stiles in the Los Angeles Times. Authorities have linked Samsung vice chairman Lee Jae-yong, son of chairman Lee Kun-hee and the firm's de facto leader, to an influence-peddling scandal that has Lee Jae-yong: Did he pay bribes? ensnared South Korean President

Park Geun-hye. Prosecutors allege that Lee Jaeyong, 48, diverted \$38 million to Park confidante Choi Soon-sil "to boost support for a controversial merger between two Samsung affiliates." Lee denies any wrongdoing. A separate court process is deciding whether to make Park's December impeachment by the legislature permanent.



The arrest has renewed calls for South Korea to rein in its massive family-run corporations, known as chaebol, said Paul Mozur and Choe Sang-hun in The New York Times. Chaebol play an outsize role in the South Korean economy, "with the 10 largest generating annual revenue exceeding 80 percent of South Korea's gross domestic product."

Samsung's electronics arm alone accounts for more than one-fifth of the country's exports. But their power "is coming up against rising public anger over the perception of corruption and favoritism." Among the 10 top chaebol, six company leaders have been convicted of white-collar crimes; many have received pardons or reduced sentences.

Washington: White House could change trade stats

The Trump administration might tweak how the government calculates the U.S. trade deficit, said William Mauldin and Devlin Barrett in The Wall Street Journal. The White House is looking at excluding so-called re-exports from its calculations, so liquefied natural gas that the U.S. imports and stores before transferring to other buyers around the world, for example, would no longer be counted as an export. That would make trade deficits "appear larger" than in years past and "give the Trump administration ammunition" to argue for a renegotiation of trade deals and for imposing new tariffs.

Food: Burger King owner to buy Popeyes for \$1.8B

The company that owns Burger King and coffee chain Tim Hortons is adding fried chicken to its portfolio, said Nathan Bomey in USA Today. Restaurant Brands International agreed this week to purchase Atlantabased Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen for \$1.8 billion. The Southerninspired fast-food chain has more than 2,600 locations, "about double what it had in 2008," but its sales growth has slowed over the past year. Brazilian investment firm 3G Capital, which owns 42.6 percent of the voting shares in Restaurant Brand and engineered Burger King's takeover of Tim Hortons, is known for aggressive cost cutting.

Retail: Online sales surge for Walmart

Amazon dominates the online marketplace, but Walmart "is catching up fast," said Paul La Monica in CNN.com. The big-box retailer said this week that its fourth-quarter online sales grew 29 percent from a year ago, compared with 22 percent for Amazon. Walmart has taken big steps to grow its digital business, spending heavily on acquisitions like e-commerce startup Jet.com and rolling out free two-day shipping on online orders over \$35. Still, Walmart's online sales account for only 3 percent of its annual global sales, about \$14 billion. That compares with \$94 billion in net global sales for Amazon.

Consumer goods: Kraft walks away from Unilever bid

Kraft Heinz has ended its brief courtship of consumer goods giant Unilever, said Carl O'Donnell in Reuters.com. The U.S. food firm pulled back from its \$143 billion merger proposal last week after being "flatly rejected" by Anglo-Dutch Unilever, which owns brands like Lipton Tea and Dove soap. Unilever executives reportedly felt their business was too distinct from Kraft's. But Kraft's willingness to look outside the food industry for big buys could hint at future deals. Analysts have floated Colgate-Palmolive as a potential target.

Looks matter for aspiring CEOs

"If you want to be a chief executive officer, it helps to look the part," said Alina Dizik in The Wall Street Journal. In a recent study, Duke University researchers asked 2,000 people to compare photos of a CEO and a non-CEO and rate them based on how "competent" the person appeared to be. Despite not knowing which person was the actual executive and having no other biographical knowledge, study participants consistently "rated the CEOs as looking more competent." In general, the chief executive officers had square jaws, sharper features, and a more mature appearance. Looking competent isn't the same as being attractive, but rather is "the opposite of baby-faced," said study author John Graham, a professor of finance at Duke. Researchers also linked a competent appearance with higher CEO pay. But they found "no evidence that looking competent leads to better business decisions."



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Health insurance: Can HSAs help replace Obamacare?

"The health savings account is having its moment," said Kris Mamula in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. As Republicans debate how to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, two things look certain: "Consumers will shoulder a bigger share of health-care costs in the future" and any GOP health-care plan will heavily rely on HSAs. The accounts, which are usually paired with high-deductible health-insurance plans, allow people to set aside money tax free to pay for medical expenses not covered by health insurance, such as copays and deductibles. HSAs have grown in

popularity since they were introduced in 2003, and some 30 percent of employers now offer an HSA-eligible health-insurance plan. Republicans want to expand the use of these savings accounts because they see them as an effective tool to drive down overall health-care expenditure. When consumers have to spend their own money rather than an insurer's, HSA advocates argue, they're more likely to search for better, cheaper care options.

Every GOP health-care plan under consideration would dramatically expand the use of HSAs, said Julie Appleby in CNN.com. This year, contributions to the savings accounts are capped at \$3,400 for an individual and \$6,750 for a family. House Speaker Paul Ryan's plan would raise the HSA contribution limit to match the total of the participant's annual health-insurance deductible and out-of-pocket maximum. Sen. Rand Paul's plan would re-



HSAs make smarter consumers, Republicans say.

move caps entirely and allow HSAs to be offered with any type of insurance, "not just high-deductible plans." But critics point out that raising contribution limits benefits only those who can afford to contribute large sums. And while money invested in an HSA grows tax free, similar to a 401(k) retirement fund, "older or sicker consumers could blow through their entire fund every year and never accumulate any savings."

Studies do suggest that people with HSAs use less health care than those

without such plans, said Gillian White in *TheAtlantic.com*. But there's little evidence that this behavior is good for their health. Patients sometimes "forgo medical care while waiting for their accounts to build up." One study of high-deductible plans found that rather than shopping around for the best and cheapest treatment, many individuals simply opted for less medical care, "including the types of preventive care that could result in fewer medical emergencies, and financial shocks, later on." For HSAs to truly succeed, "we'd all need to change our mindset," said April Fulton in *NPR.org*. We like to think of our future selves as healthier and more financially secure—when in fact health and income both tend to decline with age. Our refusal to recognize that reality is one reason that half of Americans don't have a retirement account. If those people won't or can't put aside money for their old age, will they really save for an unforeseen health crisis?

What the experts say

Don't cheer a big tax refund

"A generous income tax refund from Uncle Sam may feel like free money, but don't be fooled-it isn't," said Darla Mercado in CNBC.com. The average refund for 2015 was \$2,860, a chunk of cash that could help you pay down debt or save for retirement. But a massive check also means you've massively overpaid, depleting your cash flow to give the IRS what amounts to an interest-free loan. If you overpaid, ask your employer for a new W-4 form so you can adjust the amount withheld from each paycheck. You'll need to change the number of personal allowances you claim—"the more you have, the less tax will be withheld." To figure out the right number of allowances, use the withholding calculator available at IRS.gov.

The ideal retirement savings rate

There's no correct percentage of your salary that you should be saving for retirement, said Walter Updegrave in *CNN.com*. The standard advice to put aside 15 percent a year is a "reasonable target," but a lot depends on how early, or late, you start saving. A 25-year-old who earns \$40,000 a year, gets 2 percent annual raises, and puts aside 15 percent of his or her pay year in, year out should be able to save

\$1.2 million by age 65, assuming a 6 percent annual return. But if "you put off saving until age 30, you would need to sock away nearly 20 percent of your salary to end up with the same size nest egg." The best advice is to check your savings progress regularly using an online retirement income calculator, "and then make any adjustments necessary to stay on track."

Avoid overborrowing for college

"Smarter borrowing during your college years could cut your student loan payment after graduation by more than \$1,200 a year," said Kelli Grant in CNBC.com. About half of undergraduate borrowers take out more in student loans than they need, according to a recent survey by NerdWallet, with the average graduate borrowing \$11,597 too much. After factoring in interest, the result is an extra \$119 in loan payments each month over a 10-year repayment period. Of course, the overborrowing is often intentional, with the money going toward lifestyle expenses like monthly bills and clothing. "So how much is too much to borrow?" One rule of thumb is that your total debt at graduation should be less than your expected starting salary. "Any more than that, and you're likely to struggle with repayment."

Charity of the week

Named after the first African-American Supreme Court justice, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (tmcf.org) is the only national organization that represents the nation's 47 publicly supported historically



black colleges and universities. These schools make up only 3 percent of American colleges, but disproportionately enroll low-income, first-generation, academically underprepared students. About 97 percent of all students at the colleges will seek financial assistance to help complete their education. Since its founding in 1987, the fund has awarded \$250 million in assistance to schools and institutionsincluding \$2.5 million in scholarships in 2015 to nearly 450 low-income, high-performing students. Close to 100 percent of the fund's scholarship recipients graduate from college, and each year the organization helps some 200 students obtain executive-track career positions.

Each charity we feature has earned a four-star overall rating from Charity Navigator, which rates not-for-profit organizations on the strength of their finances, their governance practices, and the transparency of their operations. Four stars is the group's highest rating.



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Issue of the week: Labor's diminishing clout

Organized labor has come up short in "the most important trial of unions' influence since President Trump's win last year," said Max Ehrenfreund in *The Washington Post*. After years of dogged campaigning, the International Association of Machinists last week failed to sway the workers at a major Boeing factory in South Carolina to organize. Nearly three-quarters of the North Charleston plant's 3,000 employees voted against unionizing. The defeat wasn't a surprise. South Carolina is "profoundly hostile to organized labor." Just 1.6 per-

cent of the state's workers belong to a union, the lowest level in the U.S. But organizers hoped to gain a foothold in the state's resurgent manufacturing sector by unionizing workers at one of its most recognizable companies. Now, the machinists will have to wait at least a year before petitioning for another vote.

The problem for unions is that the whole country looks increasingly like South Carolina, said Josh Eidelson in *Bloomberg Businessweek*. It's a right-to-work state, which means employees aren't required to pay union dues, even if they work under a union-negotiated contract. That deprives organized labor of a key source of revenue and reduces membership: "The unionization rate in right-to-work states is less than half the rest of the country's." Kentucky and Missouri both banned the mandatory collection of dues this year, bringing the total number of right-to-work states to 28. A conservative majority on the U.S. Supreme Court could further advance the right-to-work cause by striking down mandatory union fees for government employees. That would devastate



Boeing workers in South Carolina cheer Trump.

an already weak labor movement. Only 10.7 percent of U.S. workers are in a union today; in 1983, the union membership rate was 20.1 percent.

It doesn't help that President Trump is driving a wedge into the labor movement, said Noam Scheiber in *The New York Times*. Trump performed better among union voters, a core Democratic constituency, than any Republican since President Reagan in 1984. Many union members were won over by Trump's promises to

rewrite trade agreements, spend on infrastructure, and punish employers that outsource jobs. Workers at Boeing's South Carolina factory "spoke of a rising feeling of empowerment tied to the president's posture," which led some to conclude that they didn't need to unionize while Trump had their back.

Tellingly, the president didn't mention the union vote when he visited the Boeing plant last week, said Andrew McGill in *TheAtlantic.com*. The White House supports right-to-work laws, and Trump's first choice for Labor secretary, fast-food executive Andrew Puzder, "was about as unpalatable to labor leaders as anyone he could have picked." But the president has never started "a fight with unions en masse." He simply ignores them—presumably to avoid alienating his working-class voters who still rely on union protection—and makes promises to deliver jobs and better wages on his own. At this point, a frontal assault on labor might not even be necessary, "and that may be the biggest problem for unions of all."

The economy charges ahead

Neil Irwin
The New York Times

"You could be forgiven for not noticing it, but the U.S. economy is gaining momentum," said Neil Irwin. The political news from Washington has been so dramatic that a steady stream of better-than-expected economic data hasn't gotten much attention. On nearly every front, "the economy seems to be enjoying consistent, broad-based growth." Retail sales rose 0.4 percent in January, while manufacturing output rose 0.5 percent. The number of permits issued for new housing units "is up 8.2 percent from a year ago, as the housing recovery kicks into a higher gear." The economy added 227,000 jobs in January, improving an already low unemployment

rate. Meanwhile, "the number of people filing new claims for jobless benefits each week keeps hitting lows not seen since the 1970s." All of this good news creates "a puzzle" for Federal Reserve Board Chair Janet Yellen. The central bank must figure out how much it needs to raise interest rates to keep inflation in check without stopping the expansion "in its tracks." Things could also go south if President Trump triggers a protectionist trade war, or disappoints the stock market, which is surging on his promises to cut taxes and regulations. But for now, "things are looking pretty good for 2017 if Trump and Yellen can avoid messing it up."

Industrial revolutions aren't easy

Tyler Cowen
Bloomberg.com

"Why should it be different this time?" That's the typical response I get when I raise concerns about what automation might mean for the future of jobs, said Tyler Cowen. People point out that centuries ago the Western world successfully replaced most of its agricultural jobs with ones in industry and the economy continued to grow. So when self-driving vehicles and automated checkouts displace truck drivers and grocery clerks in coming years, they argue, new jobs will spring up elsewhere and the economy will keep ticking along. "As economics, that may well be correct," but it ignores the massive turmoil that such transitions can generate. When farmwork-

ers migrated to the city for factory jobs in the early years of Britain's Industrial Revolution, standards of living dropped. By some estimates, real wages fell about 10 percent from 1770 to 1810; it took another 60 years before workers enjoyed sustained wage gains. Politically, the disruption wrought by industrialization resulted in the rise of socialist ideologies. Those theories inspired the Western social welfare state, but they also laid the foundations for the Soviet Union. The original Industrial Revolution was "eventually a boon for virtually all of humanity." With luck, the next one will be, too, but that doesn't mean the process of adaptation will be easy.

The plaintiff who challenged abortion laws

Norma McCorvey When Norma McCorvey agreed to be a plaintiff in a 1970 lawsuit challenging

Texas' anti-abortion law, she didn't even read the affidavit. Known by the legal pseudonym "Jane Roe," she gave birth to her unwanted child four months later, surrendered the baby for adoption, and had little further contact with her lawyers. Yet McCorvey's

case led to one of the most significant and divisive Supreme Court decisions in U.S. history: the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* ruling that established a constitutional right to abortion. "I don't require that much in my life," McCorvey reflected in 1994. "I just never had the privilege to go into an abortion clinic, lay down, and have an abortion."

Born in Simmesport, La., but raised in Texas, McCorvey had a "difficult childhood," said *The Guardian* (U.K.). Her mother was an alcoholic, her TV repairman father was absent, and at age 15 "she was sent to live with a cousin who abused her sexually." Married at 16, she soon left her abusive husband; her mother raised their daughter. At 18, she had a second child, born out of wedlock, whom she gave up for adoption. She came out as a lesbian but at 22 was pregnant



again, said *The New York Times*. McCorvey wanted an abortion, but the procedure was banned in Texas and most other states, except when the mother's life was at risk. She was sent by a lawyer to visit Dallas attorneys Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffee, who wanted a plaintiff to challenge Texas' abortion laws. They succeeded: The Supreme Court's 1973 ruling effectively legal-

ized abortion during the first trimester. McCorvey "remained largely unknown for nearly a decade" after the decision, before shedding her anonymity and joining the abortion rights movement.

Then, in 1995, McCorvey made "a stunning reversal," said *The Washington Post*. She became a born-again Christian and a staunch foe of abortion. Critics portrayed her as "hungry for cash and attention," while anti-abortion activists hailed McCorvey's defection "as a victory for their cause." Some observers said she was used as a prop by both sides in the abortion fight, but McCorvey seemed to accept her own role in history. "I wasn't the wrong person to become Jane Roe," she'd said in 1994. "I wasn't the right person to become Jane Roe. I was just the person who became Jane Roe."

The 'funky drummer' who gave hip-hop its essential beat

With one slick, 20-second drum solo, Clyde Stubblefield made music history. Toward the end of James Brown's 1969 track "Funky Drummer,"

Clyde Stubblefield 1943-2017

Stubblefield lets loose with a harddriving beat punctuated

by delicate snare hits, as the Godfather of Soul asks over and over, "Ain't it funky?" That funky drum break would be sampled more than 1,300 times, and served as the backbeat for classic hiphop tracks like Public Enemy's "Fight the Power," LL Cool J's "Mama Said Knock You Out," and Dr. Dre's "Let Me Ride." Yet Stubblefield didn't think much of his iconic solo. "I didn't like the song," he said in 2014. "I still don't really get off on it."

Born in Chattanooga, Tenn., Stubblefield "was drawn to the rhythms of local industrial sounds," said *The New York Times*. "There was a factory that puffed out air, pop-BOOM, pop-BOOM," he recalled. "And train tracks, click-clack, click-clack. I listened to all that for six years, playing my drums against it." As a teenager, he played with Otis Redding before joining Brown's band in 1965. Drumming "with punch, nimbleness, and wet texture" on some of the superstar's essential civil rights-era albums, including Sav It Loud-I'm Black and I'm Proud and Sex Machine, Stubblefield "never appeared to be breaking a sweat."

After leaving Brown in 1971, Stubblefield moved to Madison, Wis., where he played nightclubs and "released a handful of solo albums," said RollingStone.com. Struggling with health problems in his later years, the drummer sometimes wondered how much money he was owed by the rappers and DJs who "borrowed" his drum patterns. "They never gave me credit, never paid me," he said. "It didn't bug me or disturb me. But I think it's disrespectful."

The New York hotelier who ran an artists' haunt

Stanley Bard 1934–2017 Stanley Bard's Chelsea Hotel was a haven for the bohemian demimonde.

During Bard's four-decade proprietorship, the 12-story Gothic fortress on Manhattan's West 23rd Street was home to artists, writers, rock stars, and innumerable oddballs. Arthur C. Clarke,

who called the Chelsea his "spiritual home," wrote 2001: A Space Odyssey there. Arthur Miller moved into the hotel after his divorce from Marilyn Monroe. Bob Dylan composed much of his classic 1966 album Blonde on Blonde in Room 211. One longtime resident likened the Chelsea to a human menagerie, with Bard its beaming, benevolent keeper, lenient about rules and rent. "I don't ever want the Chelsea to turn into a normal place just in business to make money," Bard said. "I want to keep the atmosphere kooky but nice, eccentric but beautiful."

Born in the Bronx, Bard was the son of Hungarian-Jewish immigrants, said *The New York Times*. His furrier father quit the profession "because of his allergies" and bought the Chelsea with two investors in 1947. It was already a New York cultural landmark: Past residents included Mark Twain, Frida Kahlo, and Thomas Wolfe. Bard started working at the Chelsea in 1957 "as a



plumber's assistant with a college degree," and became manager and majority shareholder following his father's death in 1964. During Bard's ownership, "the only house rule seemed to be 'anything goes,'" said *The Times* (U.K.). Wild, drug-fueled parties were common. Andy Warhol "superstar" Edie Sedgwick

once set her mattress on fire at 2 a.m., forcing the hotel's evacuation; in 1978 punk rocker Sid Vicious was arrested for allegedly stabbing girlfriend Nancy Spungen to death in Room 100. "Yet Bard had a Panglossian ability to disregard such mishaps." He was equally relaxed about upkeep. Paint peeled, and "the cockroaches were alleged to be the size of rats." Nevertheless the upbeat hotelier insisted his accommodations were "right up there with anything at the Plaza."

Ultimately, Bard's louche landmark fell victim to gentrification, as the once gritty neighborhood surrounding the Chelsea "became a hangout for hedge-fund managers," said *The Daily Telegraph* (U.K.). Ousted in a boardroom coup in 2007, Bard retired to Florida, sad that his beloved hotel had been sold to high-end developers. "I created something over a lifetime that I thought was beautiful and worth preserving," he said. "Why would anyone want to change that?"

America's improbable pillow king

Mike Lindell was an insomniac with a crack cocaine addiction when the idea for 'the world's best pillow' came to him in a dream, said writer Josh Dean. Last year, his sales hit \$280 million.

S SO MANY great entrepreneurial success stories do, the tale of Mike Lindell begins in a crack house. It was the fall of 2008, and the then-47-yearold divorced father of four from the Minneapolis suburbs had run out of crack, again. He had been up for either 14 or 19 days, trying to save his struggling startup and making regular trips into the city to visit his dealer, Ty. This time, Lindell arrived at Ty's apartment and received a shock instead: The dealer refused his business. Tv wasn't going to sell him any more crack until he ended his binge. He'd also called the two other dealers Lindell used and ordered them to do the same.

Many people would be ashamed by this story. Lindell tells it all the time. "I was like, 'Wow, drug dealers care!" he says. The moment wasn't the end of his drug abuse, which started in his 20s

when he owned bars and stretched through the early years of MyPillow, the Chaska, Minn., company he founded in 2005 to fulfill his dream of making "the world's best pillow." It was, however, his low point. It was when he vowed to get better.

The story is impossible to confirm; Ty isn't reachable for comment. But it's become part of Lindell's legend.

Eight-plus years later, Lindell is sober and phenomenally successful. He quit everything—alcohol, powdered cocaine, and crack—after one final party on Jan. 16, 2009, and presides over an empire that's still growing precipitously. Last year he opened a second factory, saw sales rise from \$115 million to \$280 million, and almost tripled his workforce, to 1,500. To date he's sold more than 26 million pillows at \$45 and up, a huge number of them directly to consumers who call and order by phone after seeing or hearing one of his inescapable TV and radio ads.

On this day in early November, he's just back from a week in New York, spent celebrating the election of Donald Trump. He's spent the morning catching up on business with various employees who cycle in and out.

"This is my head of IT, Jennifer Pauly,"



Lindell became obsessed with making a pillow that kept its shape.

Lindell says, as a young woman pops in. "She's a good example of me taking my employees and knowing their skills. I have a housepainter in charge of all my maintenance at the factory. Jennifer is self-taught. Did you ever go to school for IT?"

"I took some Microsoft classes, but that's basically it," she says. "I knew how to run a spreadsheet, and that's why he trusted me with data."

Lindell laughs loudly. He wears two discreet hearing aids, but everyone says he's been boisterous forever. "God's given me a gift to be able to put people in the right position, where their strengths are!" he says.

Next, Heather Lueth, Lindell's oldest daughter, the company's graphic designer, comes in to talk about the latest email campaigns. MyPillow is, someone at the company told me, more a family forest than a family tree. Lindell's brother Corey, who invested at one of MyPillow's lowest points, is now the second-largest shareholder. His job: doing essentially whatever. Today he's fixing a grandfather clock.

Larry Kating, director of manufacturing, calls from the new factory in nearby Shakopee to discuss whether or not to make 30,000 pillows for Costco that the store hasn't asked for yet. Lindell's vote: Go

for it! "You're always juggling stuff like that," he says. He's an unusual manager, governing largely on instinct and by making seemingly wild gambles that he swears are divinely inspired. "We don't use PowerPoints," he says. "I end up getting stuff in prayer."

THE PILLOW CAME to him in a dream. This was 2003. Lindell owned a pair of successful bars outside Minneapolis and enjoyed the lifestyle a bit too much. He was, he says, a "very functional drug user" with four kids and a nice house. He helped with homework, took the family on vacation, and was a decent father and husband, other than the fact that he used cocaine.

Throughout his life he'd sought the perfect pillow. He never slept well, and things kept happening to worsen the problem. He got sciatica. He was in a bad car acci-

dent. He nearly died while skydiving, after nearly dying while motorcycling on his way to skydiving. He got addicted to cocaine.

When he did sleep, it was fitful. "That's one of the problems with cocaine," he says, seemingly without irony. One morning, after he woke—or maybe he was still up, he can't recall—he sat at the kitchen table and wrote "MyPillow" over and over until he'd sketched the rough logo for a product that didn't exist. When his daughter Lizzie came through and saw him maniacally scribbling the same words over and over like Jack Nicholson in *The Shining*, she asked what he was doing.

"I'm going to invent the best pillow the world has ever seen!" he exclaimed. "It's going to be called MyPillow!"

The only way Lindell was ever happy with a pillow was when he found a way to, in his words, "micro-adjust" an existing one. It would typically be foam; he'd yank and pull the filling apart to break up the inside, then arrange and pile up the torn foam like a mouse building a nest, until it was the right height for his neck. Then he'd sleep. By morning, it would be all messed up again.

When Lindell imagined his perfect pillow, it was micro-adjustable but would keep its

shape all night. He bought every variety of foam and then asked his two sons to sit on the deck of the house with him and tear the foam into different-size pieces that they'd stuff into prototypes for testing. Day after day they did this, until Lindell settled on a mix of three sizes of foam—a pebble, a dime, and a quarter, roughly. When he stuffed just the right amount of that mixture into a case and shmushed it around to the shape he wanted, it held that shape. It was perfect.

Lindell believed this pillow "would change lives." He made 300 and went in search of buyers, stopping at every big-box retailer in the area. "I said, 'I have the best pillow ever made. How many would you like?" You can imagine how that went.

When someone suggested he try a mall kiosk, Lindell borrowed \$12,000 to rent one for six weeks, starting in the middle of November 2004. He sold his first pillow the first day and it was, he says, "the most amazing feeling." But he'd priced the product too low. His cost was more than the retail price. Plus, his pillow was too big for standard pillowcases.

The kiosk failed. He borrowed more money against the house, and also from friends who weren't sick of him yet. When desperate, he counted cards at the blackjack table to pay for materials. Eventually, all the casinos within a day's drive banned him.

The day after he closed the kiosk, he got a call from one of the few customers, who declared, "This pillow changed my life!" This enthusiastic buyer ran the Minneapolis Home + Garden Show, one of the largest for home products in the country. He wanted Lindell to have a booth.

Lindell took 300 pillows (this time they were a standard size) and sold them all. He also got himself invited to take a spot at the Minnesota State Fair and sold well. This was a revelation. There were dozens of home-and-garden shows around the country and countless more fairs. "Those are your testing grounds," he says. A product that works at the fair works, period.

For the next few years, this is basically how the company operated. Lindell and a few key salespeople drove around in trucks stuffed full of pillows to sell at fairs. They were all effective, but no one's pitch—sermon was more like it—moved the merch like Lindell's.

E DIDN'T GIVE up the drugs. His habit continued, his 20-year marriage broke up, and he lost his house, because he was constantly borrow-

ing money to pay his suppliers. He was barreling toward that moment with Ty, the dealer. Finally, he had one last blowout and quit cold turkey. "I knew if I waited one more day, it would be over," he says.

Lindell knew the best way to sell his pillow was to present his story live, as he'd been doing at shows since 2005. He decided to make an infomercial. His friends thought he was nuts.

The spot opened with Lindell, in a satiny blue button-down that's now his trademark garment, saying, "Don't change that channel, because the next half hour is going to change your life." He just ad-libbed, saying, for instance, that down pillows were



MyPillow nearly tripled its workforce last year, to 1,500.

"the worst thing that ever happened to America" and that MyPillow was so malleable that "you can fold it up into little balloon animals."

The half-hour infomercial aired for the first time on Oct. 7, 2011, at 3 a.m. on the East Coast. The business "went straight up," Lindell says. He hired everyone he could find—literally off barstools sometimes—and put them to work answering phones or sewing on machines that he stuffed into every corner of a local bus garage lent to him by a friend. In six months, he grew from 50 to 500 employees and sold almost \$100 million in pillows.

But Lindell never bothered to figure out his indirect costs. He didn't really even know what those were. Checks were flying off his desk, more and more of them to pay for the infomercial spots, with no way to know which ones were working and which were just wasted money. He was losing \$250,000 a week.

What saved the entrepreneur was FedEx. It hadn't occurred to him to negotiate shipping rates; he just paid retail with a bunch of different shippers. A company rep came in, asked about his costs, and offered him a rate so low he couldn't believe it. "Wow,"

Lindell said. "You can do this?" Overnight, a red number turned black.

ALKING THROUGH THE factory, Lindell shows off his newest products: a dog bed and a mattress topper. Then he points out a section of the building where returns are handled. Fewer than 3 percent of MyPillow buyers return products, he says, and "less than 1/20th of 1 percent of those return a product twice." Lindell obsesses over customer satisfaction. If a customer is on hold for more than a few minutes, he gets an alert on his phone. He expects customer emails to be answered within minutes, and if a queue builds up, he gets an alert about that, too. He often

handles hundreds of minutes of calls per month himself.

For years, MyPillow was advertised as the cure for almost every sleep problem as well as many health ailments. Ads boasted that using one could alleviate fibromyalgia, joint pain, and restless leg syndrome, as well as promote delta sleep, the most restorative phase of the sleep cycle. Early last fall, Lindell settled with 10 California district attorneys who sued MyPillow for false advertising, arguing that these claims had no scientific backing. The company denied any wrongdoing but agreed to pay \$1 million to settle and to remove those claims from any advertising in California.

The California suit was briefly embarrassing but seems to have had no lingering effects. It certainly hasn't hurt sales or Lindell's enthusiasm. The new factory could run faster and soon will, he says. MyPillow could push production up to more than 85,000 pillows a day. To get there, he says, all he needs to do is buy more media. He says that what he calls the "tsunami"—the next boom in sales, the one that will lead to \$1 billion—started last fall. The election was just another harbinger.

Two women who did merchandising for the Trump campaign have stopped by for a tour and have been tailing our group. They seem in awe of the scale and efficiency here, from an essentially flat and somewhat chaotic-seeming organization ruled by a single outlandish man.

What's the largest sales month you've ever had? one asks.

"MyPillow is always the biggest we've ever been on the day you're standing here," Lindell replies.

Excerpted from an article that originally appeared in Bloomberg Businessweek. Reprinted with permission.

Crossword No. 397: Don't Bet Against Them by Matt Gaffney

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- 1 Prepare leftovers
- 5 City whose mayor is Marianne Borgen
- Forbidden topic of discussion
- 14 Biggest of seven
- Pet
- 16 Hello from Don Ho
- 17 When the Patriots won the Super Bowl on Feb. 5, the Atlanta Zoo, having lost a bet, was forced to name an animal after Tom Brady; they rudely chose a rare "hissing" species of this creature
- College student's decision
- Legally handling a soccer ball, one way
- Function
- Sounds from the soothed
- Smithers on The Simpsons, for one
- Game point for the server
- Bride and groom on the run
- "So glad the weekend is almost here"
- 34 Devoured
- Vestiges
- Otherwise
- Stern's milieu
- 41 Badmouth
- 42 One of the senses
- 43 Hang a right, say
- Most enormous
- Took a load off
- Editor's notation

- Choice 48
- 50 Societal standard
- 52 Put on the wall
- 56 Having hit the roof
- Younger sister of Lindsay Lohan
- 60 Haute
- Bring to bear
- When the Patriots won Super Bowl XLIX. Seattle's mayor had to send Providence's a gift basket including coffee from the original store of this chain
- North of 1980s controversy
- Cosmic wonder
- Painter Mondrian
- 68 Works with a blowtorch
- Golf bag supply
- 70 Pizzeria in Do the Right Thing

DOWN

- 1 Silly and outrageous
- In harmony
- Jasmine and Forbidden "You and what army?"
- U.S. Supreme Court justice, 1981-2006
- Thick rug
- Driver's ID
- Island with a famous North Shore
- Under control
- **10** Pie mode
- When the Patriots won Super Bowl XXXVIII, Charlotte's mayor had to send Boston's mayor fried chicken from this

- 12 "Call on me, teacher! Please!
- Pair used in the Summer Olympics
- Commercial heart of Venice
- 22 Verbal attitude
- 26 Thing
- The Taming of the Shrew city
- 29 Vaper's items
- 30 Put back to zero
- 32 de la Juventud (area of Cuba)
- Poker table material
- 34 Part of NEA
- Pulled tight
- 36 When the Patriots won Super Bowl XXXIX, this Pennsylvania governor was forced to sing the national anthem at a Celtics game
- 40 Enjoying as a hobby
- 42 Peter who wrote Ghost Story
- Webmaster's code
- 45 Guatemalan women Part of calisthenics 49 routines
- Uses a star scale
- (Caribbean Island nation)
- 54 Family Matters dork
- Termites and such
- "Can you please clean out my litter box already?"
- 57 Car bar
- 59 Say It_
- Buckle under pressure
- 62 Empty (of)
- 64 It may get stubbed

The Week Contest

This week's question: An online obituary in which a family described the deceased as a selfish, "abusive" man whose life served no "obvious purpose" recently went viral. If an entrepreneur were to start a company that provided brutally honest obituaries and eulogies, what would it be called?

Last week's contest: A Palestinian barber has developed an unusual way to straighten and style his customers' hair: He sets their locks on fire. If this innovative hairdresser were to start a chain of salons named after his unorthodox approach to follicle removal, what would it be called?

THE WINNER: Head and Smolders

Ken Kellam Dallas

SECOND PLACE: Smoldilocks Ellen Cohen, New York City

THIRD PLACE: Smoke and Mirrors Janine Witte, New Hope, Pa.

For runners-up and complete contest rules, please go to theweek.com/contest.

How to enter: Submissions should be emailed to contest@theweek.com. Please include your name, address, and daytime telephone number for verification; this week, type "Honest obit" in the subject line. Entries are due by noon, Eastern Time, Tuesday, Feb. 28.



Winners will appear on the Puzzle Page next issue and at theweek.com/puzzles on Friday, Mar. 3. In the case of identical or similar entries, the first one received gets credit.

■ The winner gets a one-year subscription to The Week.

Sudoku

Fill in all the boxes so that each row, column. and outlined square includes all the numbers from 1 through 9.

Difficulty:

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	9	3	5					
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Find the solutions to all The Week's puzzles online: www.theweek.com/puzzle.

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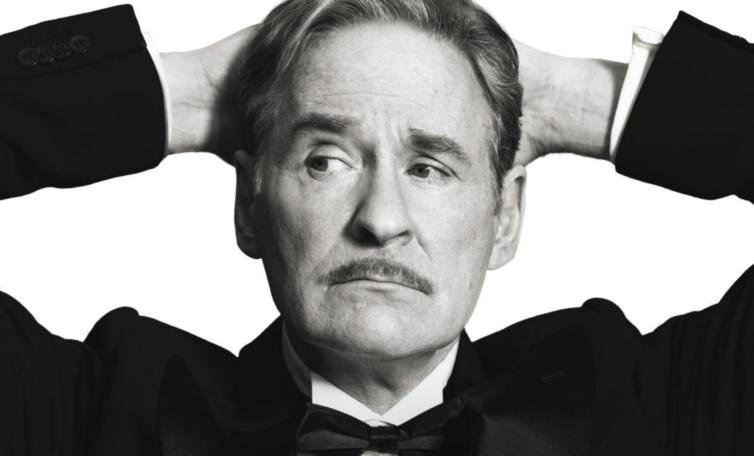
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