

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 153

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*Any statements in this issue of the Watch which are not sourced are mine.

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State of the Nation

35% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction while 60% say it is on the wrong track. (CBS News, 2/21/17)

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for January 2017 is 4.7%.

If one takes into account the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the unemployment rate for January 2017 is 9.4%. [BLS data is based on those 16 years of age and older.]

In the 4th week of February 2017, Gallup found an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.6%. It also found an under-employment rate of 9.4% (unemployed + those working part-time but wanting full-time). [This is based on those 18 years of age and older.]

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There were 5.5 million job openings at the end of December 2016. During that month 5.3 million people were hired and 5.0 million were separated from their employment.

In the 12 month period ending in December there were 62.5 million hires and 60.1 million separations yielding a net employment gain of 2.4 million. [BLS]

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41% believe the economy will get better in the next 12 months while 21% say it will get worse. Of those who think it will get better, 73% think it will be a result of Trump's new economic policies. [NBC/WSJ, 2/22/17]

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Most internet traffic comes from "bots", not people.

	<u>Total bots</u>	<u>Good bots</u>	<u>Bad bots</u>	<u>Humans</u>
2012	51%	20%	31%	49%
2013	61.5	30.5	30.5	38.5
2014	56	27	29	44
2015	48.5	19.5	29	44
2016	51.8	22.9	28.5	48.2

[Axios Visuals]

If you are not intimately familiar with “bots”, as WW was not, an internet bot is “software that performs an automated task over the internet.” “A bot is an automated application used to perform simple and repetitive tasks that would be time-consuming, mundane or impossible for a human to perform.” [Techopedia]

An example of a “good bot” is when “Google uses bots to crawl and catalog the web so when you run a search, the site can deliver appropriate results”. An example of a “bad bot” is when “hackers also use bots for all sorts of nefarious reasons, from lifting credit card numbers from an online store to scraping the text off an article and posting it on some random blog.” [Time, 5/2015]

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27% of Americans say that the Fox News cable channel is their most popular source of information about politics and current events. CNN is in second place with 23%. The broadcast networks, ABC, CBS and NBC together as a group are considered most popular by 30%. National newspapers, plus your local newspaper, are seen as most popular by 24%. Facebook and Twitter and other social media are scored at 16%. MSNBC is cast as most popular by 10%. 20% select either conservative media outlets (11%) or liberal media outlets (9%). (The above outlets add up to 156% because respondents were allowed to pick one of two of the list of news sources.) [NBC/WSJ, 2/22/17]

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You cannot bring guns onto an airplane in a carry-on bag. That line in the airborne social contract was apparently news to the flyers responsible for the 3,391 guns confiscated by the Transportation Security Administration in 2016. That’s a record number and up 30 percent from 2015. Eighty-three percent of the guns were loaded. [USA Today]

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The 1.1 million-square-foot Galleria at Pittsburgh Mills, a Pennsylvania mall that opened in 2005 which was foreclosed on last year, was auctioned off for \$100 this week. [Yahoo]

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Americans wrote 17.3 billion checks in 2015. Compare that number to the 69.5 billion debit card purchases in the same year. [Wall Street Journal]

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Zero is the number of refugees who have been implicated in a major fatal terrorist attack on U.S. soil since the Refugee Act of 1980.

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The median credit card debt of someone with a bachelor's degree is \$1,668. Business school graduates have the highest median credit card debt according to LendEDU, a marketplace for student loans: The typical MBA is \$4,604 in the hole. [Priceonomics]

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Gregg Phillips, a self-proclaimed voter fraud authority who has said--without any evidence--that there was illegal voting this past election, has enjoyed the ear of the president on such matters. Mr. Phillips, who focuses on people registered to vote in more than one state, was found to be registered to vote in Alabama, Texas and Mississippi. That doesn't mean he — or anyone, really — votes in more than one state. It just means that sometimes people decide to go to another state to live their lives. Shocking, I know. [Associated Press]

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The average one-way commute (in the U.S.) increased to 26.4 minutes in 2015 and the percentage of people who telework (from home) has increased to 4.6 % (6.8 million). [Washington Post, 2/26/17]

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U.S. auto loan debt hit a record \$1.16 trillion in the fourth quarter of 2016. That averages out to \$6,100 in car payments per licensed driver. [Bloomberg]

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“In this new world order of unfiltered or make-believe-news, the wall between real journalism and fake journalism is becoming blurred and sometimes almost invisible. When people doubt the credibility of legitimate journalism, people are robbed of the facts that underlie our entire democratic process. Elections depend on citizens making informed decisions, but that’s impossible if raw sewage is polluting their news feed. – Charlie Cook, Cook Political Report

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Ten million American adults identify as LGBT. Since 2012 that number has grown from 3.5% to the current 4.1% of the adult population. In that same period of time, the number of LGBT Millennials (those born 1980-1998) has grown from 5.8% to 7.3%. Only 1.4% of those born between 1913 and 1945 identify as LGBT currently. That number is down from 1.8% in 2012.

4.4% of females identify as LGBT, up from 3.5% in 2012. 3.7% of males so identify which is up slightly from the 3.4% who identified as LGBT in 2012.

In July 1986, just 32% believed that gay and lesbian relationships between consenting adults should be legal. As of May 2016, 68% of Americans supported legalization. [Gallup, 1/2017]

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A study from Johns Hopkins University, Harvard and Boston Children’s Hospital found that suicide attempts among lesbian, gay and bisexual teenagers dropped 14 percent when their state legalized same-sex marriage. [The Guardian]

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David Winston and Myra Miller of the Winston Group presented the following analysis of the level of engagement/interest in the political process among various ideological groups following the last election.

	<u>More</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Less</u>
Overall	50%	41%	7%
Very Conservative	69	26	5
Somewhat Conservative	54	40	6

Moderate	39	50	8
Somewhat Liberal	44	45	11
Very Liberal	65	28	6

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Tom Perez was elected Chairman of the Democratic Party on February 25th. The final vote was between Tom Perez and Congressman Keith Ellison. Ellison was elected deputy chairman by acclamation. Pete Buttigieg, the Mayor of South Bend, Indiana and the only other person with significant support, dropped out of the race before the voting started.

The last time there was a contest for the DNC Chairmanship was in 1985 when Paul Kirk beat Terry Sanford. That year Nancy Pelosi withdrew before the vote and endorsed Sanford. (Thanks, JM)

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A Last Look at the 2016 Election

The following is data from the 2016, 2012, 2008 and 2004 exit polls relative to the composition of the electorate in these elections. Here are a few reflections on this data.

- The percentage of voters between the ages of 45-64 has fallen.
- The percentage of white voters has declined.
- There has been an increase in the number of voters who describe themselves as Independents.
- Women make up 62% of those who identified as Democrats.
- The percentage of those who describe themselves as Conservative has increased dramatically. The percentage who describe themselves as liberals has increased and the percentage who describe themselves as Moderate has dropped.
- The percentage who say the country is headed in the right direction has dropped and those who say it is on the wrong track has increased.
- The number saying they live in union households has dropped.
- The percentage who say they are college grads has grown and those who say they are not college grads has dropped.
- The percentages who say they make less than \$100,000 has dropped markedly and the number who say they make more than \$100,000 has just about doubled.

- There has been a slight increase in the number who say they are married and a decrease in the number of unmarried.
- The urban vote and the suburban vote have grown. The rural vote is about what it was in 2004 but is lower than in 2008 and 2012.
- The percentage who say they go to church weekly or more has dropped by nearly 10 points and those who say they never go has grown by about a half.

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2004</u>
Male	47	47	47	46
Female	53	53	53	54
18-29 years	19%	19%	18%	17%
30-44 years	25%	27%	29%	29%
45-64 years	44%	38%	37%	38%
65 + years	16%	16%	16%	16%
White	71%	72%	74%	77%
African Americans	12	13	13	11
Latino	11	10	9	8
Asian	4	3	2	2
Other	3	2	3	2
	<u>2016</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2004</u>
Democrats	36%	38%	39%	37%
Republicans	33%	32%	32%	37%
Independents	31%	29%	29%	26%
Dem Male	38%			
Dem Female	62%			
GOP Male	52%			
GOP Female	48%			
IND Male	55%			
IND Female	45%			
<u>Ideology</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2004</u>
Liberal	26%	25%	22%	21%
Moderate	39	41	44	45
Conservative	35	35	34	21

Right Direction	33%	46%	20%	49%
Wrong Track	62	52	75	46
<u>Union Household</u>				
Yes	18%	18%	21%	24%
No	82	82	79	76
<u>College Grads</u>				
Yes	50%	47%	44%	42%
No	50	53	56	58%
<u>Income</u>				
Under \$50,000	36%	41%	38%	45%
\$50-100,000	30	31	36	37
\$100,000 or more	34	28	26	18
<u>Marital status</u>				
Married	59%	60%	66%	63%
Unmarried	41	40	34	37
Urban	34%	32%	30%	30%
Suburban	49	47	49	46
Rural	17	21	21	16
<u>Attend Religious Services</u>				
Weekly or more	33%	42%	40%	42%
Occasionally	45	40	40	42
Never	22	17	16	15

A last word about the 2016 presidential election, "...if there was one constant in 2016, it was that none of the usual rules of politics applied in the primaries or general election. It is entirely possible that 2016 was an aberration. It is equally possible that it could have portended the beginning of a new normal." – Jennifer Duffy, Cook Political Report

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President Trump

Two independents ran for president in 2016. Rather than run as independents and face the all but insurmountable task of securing a place on the ballot in every state, they each decided to seek the nomination of political parties that were already assured a place on the ballot in every state.

One of them decided to try for the nomination of the Democratic Party, he did not make it. And he is now an independent again.

One of them decided to try for the nomination of the Republican Party. He secured the nomination and ultimately was elected President of the United States.

Donald Trump is the first Independent to become President. He is not a president like any other president that we can recall. He appears to be operating as president much as he did as the head of his personal business empire. Everything centers on him.

Trump has made a lot of promises to a lot of people. Time will tell whether the people who believed that he would solve their problems will feel that he has fulfilled his promises.

The Donald Trump that spoke to the joint session of Congress last Tuesday is a Trump that has not been seen in public since he started his campaign, except perhaps on election night. It was surprising to many and softer than folks have come to expect. Among other things, he made clear that he understands that he needs Congress to achieve what he has promised to achieve.

While it is very early in his tenure, here is the public's grade of President Trump's performance up until now.

		<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
2/23-25/17	Gallup	41%	54%
2/18-22/17	NBC/WSJ	44%	48%
2/13-19/17	NBC/SM	43%	54%
2/17-21/17	CBS News	39%	51%
2/16-21/17	Quinnipiac	38%	55%
2/11-13/17	Fox News	48%	47%
2/7-12/17	Pew Research	42%	54%
2/2-6/17	Quinnipiac	42%	51%
2/1-2/17	CBS News	44%	48%

1/31-2/2/17 CNN/ORC 44% 53%

Here are the initial job approval/disapproval numbers of the last ten presidents before Trump.

Approval/Disapproval – Beginning of first term

Kennedy	72/06 (2/15/61)
Carter	71/09(2/21/77)
Eisenhower	67/08 (2/27/53)
George HW Bush	63/13(3/2/89)
G W Bush	62/21(2/21/01)
Obama	62/25(2/22/09)
Nixon	60/06 (2/25/69)
Clinton	59/29(2/28/93)
Reagan	55/18(2/16/81)

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As he begins his term in office Trump has the advantage of the fact that 60% of Americans are mainly hopeful and optimistic about the future of the country. 40% are mainly worried and pessimistic.

52% disagree with the statement that the “economic and political systems of the country are stacked against people like me.”

53% say “the news media and other elites are exaggerating the problems with the Trump administration because they are uncomfortable and threatened with the kind of change that Trump represents.”

57% think it is likely/fairly likely that Trump will bring real change in the direction of the country. And of those people who think he will bring change, 63% say it is the right kind of change while 30% say it will be the wrong kind of change. [NBC/WSJ, 2/22/17]

On the economy, Trump’s job approval is 44% approve/38% disapprove. However, on foreign policy his performance so far has earned a 34% approve/53% disapprove. (CBS, 2/21/17)

43% of Americans express positive feelings toward Trump while 47% express negative feelings. [NBC/WSJ, 2/22/17]

Is Trump trustworthy? 37% say yes. Here is how he compares with the three presidents before him when they were asked the same question: Clinton 63%, Bush 60%, Obama 76%.

Is Trump well informed? 39% say yes. Here is how he compares with the three presidents before him when they were asked the question: Clinton 79%, Bush 62%, Obama 79%. [Pew, 2/2017]

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38% of Americans believe that Trump has a relationship with Russia's Vladimir Putin that is too friendly. 32% have no opinion and 29% believe the relationship is not too friendly.

53% think that Congress should investigate whether or not there was contact between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government. And 54% believe that the investigation should include whether or not the Russian government interfered with the 2016 presidential election. [NBC/WSJ, 2/18-22/17]

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It does appear that Trump and his administration are setting out to unwind, eliminate or otherwise change a variety of the actions that President Obama took during his tenure, especially those things done during the latter part of his tenure. To direct this effort he has appointed Congressman Mick Mulvaney to be the director of the Office of Management and Budget. Mulvaney is known as a fierce fiscal conservative.

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In his first judicial appointment, to fill the vacancy on the Supreme Court, Trump has nominated 49 year old Neil Gorsuch who currently serves as an appellate judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit. If confirmed, he would replace Antonin Scalia who passed away. The President intends to replace a conservative with another conservative. By picking a person who is relatively young, history suggests that if Gorsuch is confirmed he is likely to serve on the court for 19.4 years.

According to a piece from the Pew Research Center, the tenure of a justice on the Supreme Court generally depends on her or his age at the time he ends up on the court. If under 45 when appointed the person is likely to serve for 21.6 years. If 60 years or older when appointed, the justice will serve on average for 11.7 years. [Pew Research Center]

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“The Trump administration revoked federal protections for transgender students who sought the right to use the public school restrooms that match their gender identity, taking a stand on a contentious issue that has become the central battle over LGBT rights.” [Washington Post, 2/24/17]

For a solid discussion of the lack of a rationale for the above action, see Ruth Marcus’ piece in the Washington Post on 2/24/17.

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The Congress

There is growing racial and ethnic diversity in the House and Senate. In the 107th Congress there were 36 Blacks, 19 Hispanics and 7 Asians. In this 115th Congress there are 49 Blacks, 39 Hispanics, 15 Asians and 2 Native Americans. [Pew Research Center]

The following is a list of Senate and House losses by the President’s party in the first mid-term after his election. [Jennifer Duffy, Cook Political Report]

	<u>President</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Senate losses</u>	<u>House losses</u>
1978	Jimmy Carter	D	D-3	D-15
1982	Ronald Reagan	R	R+1	R-26
1990	George HW Bush	R	R-1	R-8
1994	Bill Clinton	D	D-8	D-5
2002	George W Bush	R	R+1	R+8
2010	Barack Obama	D	D-6	D-63

Approval of the job being done by Congress is at 22% with 67% disapproving of their actions. [CBS, 2/21/17]

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One of the things that the Trump White House seems to understand is the importance of good relations with the Congress, particularly the staff who effectively run the place.

During the last congressional recess the White House made good use of the bowling alleys in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, inviting various staff members - from both sides of the aisle - to enjoy bowling and food.

Small groups of congressional staff have been invited to watch departures of Marine One from the South Law of the White House.

Moreover Democrats are regularly invited to Oval Office events and rides on presidential aircraft.

The Trump team, which is being led by former senior congressional staff, is setting out to avoid the mistakes the Obama team made in the first years of his tenure. [Mike Allen, Axios, 2/26/17]

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The House

[WW relies on the Cook Political Report for the House data below.]

The path to potential control of the House by the Democrats is steep to say the least. The Democrats need to capture 24 additional seats to take control. Only 23 incumbent Republican House members are in districts won by Hillary Clinton. Given the margins by which House members won their races in “Clinton” seats, it is highly unlikely that a sufficient number of those seats will change hands.

The following is from David Wasserman, the House guru at the Cook Political Report. (2/24/17)

“Ultimately, Trump's approval rating probably needs to be at or below 35 percent for the House to flip, but that's not out of the question. Unlike in 2016, the only outlet for voters to express disapproval of Trump will be to vote against local GOP incumbents and candidates. Democrats' 2010 fate is instructive as to why so many GOP members are eschewing the inherent bad press of rowdy town halls in favor of webcasts and constituent tele-conferences.”

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	194
Republicans	239
Vacancies	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Safe in 2017	173	205
Likely	12	24
Lean	9	11
	<u>Tossup</u>	
	2	1

In the new Congress, 87% of House Republicans will be white men, compared to just 41% of House Democrats. [Cook Political Report]

THE SENATE

Republicans	52
Democrats	46
Independents	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Seats not up in 2018	23	44
Safe in 2018	12	7
Likely/lean in 2018	13	2
Menendez		Flake
Stabenow		Heller
Casey		
Tester		
Heitkamp		
Manchin		
Baldwin		
Kaine		
Nelson		
Donnelly		
King		
McCaskill		

Note: There are unusually strong differences between the various organizations that rate Senate races. If they are accurate, the task of the Democrats to hold their existing seats let alone pick up additional seats is quite daunting. The above rankings should be considered very early.

There are 10 states that Trump won in 2016 in which Democrats are defending Senate seats in 2018. [Jennifer Duffy, Cook Political Report]

<u>State</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Margin</u>
WV	Joe Manchin	Trump +42 points
ND	Heidi Heitkamp	Trump +36 points
MT	Jon Tester	Trump+20 points
IN	Joe Donnelly	Trump+19 points
MO	Claire McCaskill	Trump+19 points
OH	Sherrod Brown	Trump+19 points
FL	Bill Nelson	Trump+ 1 point
PA	Bob Casey	Trump+ 1 point
WI	Tammy Baldwin	Trump+ 1 point

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**Women Will Get it Done:
Violence against Women
and
Odds and Ends**

There is an epidemic of violence against women in the United States. Every 9 seconds a woman is assaulted; every day more than three women are murdered by their partners; and one in four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime. This violence is all too often perpetrated—regularly with deadly consequences—by gun violence. Every day five women are murdered with guns and women in the United States are 11 times more likely to be murdered with a gun than are women in other high income countries.

However, there is reason to be optimistic: violence against women, especially domestic violence, has been brought out of the dark and is no longer considered a “family issue,” but a societal and criminal one that is both socially unacceptable and morally abhorrent. These changes have led to a decrease in instances of domestic violence but we still have a long way to go:

- Additional legislation is needed.
- Law enforcement needs greater training on how to deal with issues of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Criminal laws need to be strengthened so fewer rapists and abusers get away with their crimes.
- Women need to be believed and treated as victims when they are such.

It remains far too easy for abusers or stalkers to obtain firearms and continues to be extremely difficult to prosecute most rapists and abusers. These are issues that could be effectively helped by the passage of new laws and by giving law enforcement and prosecutors greater resources to investigate and prosecute these crimes. When the safety of women becomes important enough to our civic leaders and a priority for our law enforcement, the numbers of women affected by violence can decrease drastically. It is not a hopeless situation, in fact we have already seen positive results through legislation and societal changes, but more attention, focus, and urgency are needed to make additional inroads.

(*Data from Centers of Disease Control, DOJ reports, FBI reports, AHA fact sheet.)

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Nearly 30 percent of women ages 65 to 69 are working outside of the home, this is up from 15 percent in the late 1980s. 18% percent of women ages 70 to 74 work, this is up from 8 percent in the 1980s. Many of these women report that they work because they enjoy it. The data adds a bright chapter to the narrative of women's progress in the world of work. (NYT Upshot – Miller)

In 2016, women represented 19% of all of the behind-the-scenes employment in American films [Center for Women in Television and Film]. That percentage has remained unchanged for 20 years.

9.4% of American mutual fund managers are women. The numbers have not moved since 2008. (Morning Star – 2015 study)

There have been more than 4,600 U.S. Ambassadors who have served in foreign countries. Only 9% of them have been women.

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Restaurants

F.I.G. (Food Is Good)
232 Meeting Street
Charleston, SC 29401
843-805-5900
hello@eatafig.com

(F.I.G. reservations are available on Opentable or by phone)

Debbie, Ann, Leslie, Nazan and Yolanda flew to Charleston for a bridge (the card game) getaway. Of course, that included trying out some of Charleston's top restaurants. Debbie reported the following.

F.I.G. is a Farm to Table restaurant which, "whenever possible, uses sustainable seafood and produce from local farmers, growers and producers and all natural, hormone/antibiotic free meats and proteins."

The menu changes daily. Everything we tasted was far better than average.

For appetizers, Leslie had the Arugula Salad with pecorino canestrato, crispy shallots and arbequina (which is olive oil); I had the homemade cottage cheese and burnt eggplant (which was like a mousse) and was served with excellent brown bread.

Leslie and I ordered a second appetizer as our entrees... Leslie tried the wild mushroom and meatball soup and I selected the ricotta gnocchi and lamb Bolognese. The others in our group only ordered entrees. Nazan had the Cornflour-dusted Wreckfish Paillar with sweet potato, endive, savory granola and citrus; and Yolanda and Ann ordered the Fish Stew Provencal with white shrimp, squid, mussel and carlin gold rice.

We shared two desserts, Butterscotch Pot de Crème, amaretti with soft whipped cream and Bread Pudding with kumquat, walnut, and banana ice cream.

Everyone pronounced all the dishes as superb.

Most interesting: as we were seated, the waitress asked us if we would like separate checks. It seemed like a good idea. When our checks came we noticed that each of the items we ordered were on the correct check and the desserts had been divided into fifths. Our server explained that they have a new computer

system that does all this automatically and has much improved their lives. It even identifies the person by seat with a separate number so it is easy to accommodate the various splits and charges.

We discovered that every restaurant we visited in Charleston had and loved this new system.

F.I.G. is in the heart of downtown Charleston in a utilitarian space with simple decor, wooden chairs, and white tablecloths. It seats close to 100, including a high top table for 12 near the bar in front. One can order dinner at the bar. The servers wear denim and green chef's aprons.

There are two restrooms, both unisex!

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Field & Main Restaurant
8369 W. Main Street
Marshall, Virginia 20115
www.fieldandmainrestaurant.com
540-364-8166

Kathleen Ambrose recommended this restaurant.

The evening started with six of us getting lost on the way to the restaurant. Debbie, Florence, Sherry and Decker were in one car. Peter and I were in another. The four of them left earlier than Peter and me, their intention to do a little shopping before dinner. We were following the same set of directions given. Peter and I ultimately got there by calling the restaurant for specific directions. The other four found it on their own.

A restaurant was originally located in this building nearly two centuries ago. It is not clear whether it has been used for anything else in the interim. It became Field & Main in 2014.

The interior is fresh but not fancy. The tables have wooden tops and steel bottoms and can be arranged in tables that can accommodate 2, 4, 6 and 8 people and could be arranged to handle even larger numbers. The chairs are comfortable but simple. There are several rooms including one which has a bar and a room on the second floor.

We ordered our dinners and then several of our group went to a store called Gentle Harvest across the street. It was the store that Debbie, Florence and Sherry and Decker had planned to go to before the meal.

Debbie and Sherry started with Deviled Eggs du Jour. Peter selected the Lettuce Salad with Lindera, Farm Honey Vinegar Dressing & Shaved Vegetables. Decker chose the Anson Mills Farro Salad with Fired Roasted Poblano Vinaigrette, Roasted Beets and Arugula. Florence went with the Sauteed Brussels Sprouts with White Wine, Yuzu, Provolone & Truffle Oil. I went for the Hearth Roasted Beet with Pecan Butter Dust, Sorghum Syrup, Frisee, Blood Orange and Pecans.

As she often does, Debbie selected one of the appetizers as her entrée. It was the Cajun Style Jambalaya with Hearth Roasted Pork, Chicken & Shrimp. Decker and Florence opted for the Ember Roasted Whole Rockfish with Soy & Olive Oil (served on the bone with head and tail.) Sherry and I ordered the Whiffletree Farm Hearth Roasted Half Chicken with Its Own Jus.

We shared Cream Corn Bread Pudding and Red Island Field Peas.
We were all so full that we passed on desserts.

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Hunter's Head Tavern
9048 John Mosby Hwy (Rt. 50)
Upperville, Virginia 20184
www.huntersheadtavern.com
540-592-9020

Hunter's Head was one of the restaurants that we had heard about from Kathleen and others. On the drive back from lunch at Kathleen's (which was a treat) we passed Hunter's Hand and on the spur of the moment stopped in to make a reservation for the following evening. That night we had dinner at Field & Main.

When Peter and Florence and Debbie and I arrived at the restaurant the next night, the person at the reception stand could not find our reservation. Debbie took the lead in convincing them that we had a reservation. It was never clear whether they actually found our reservation but after a few moments she did find a table for us.

There are four rooms on the main floor centered around a main room with a roaring fire in a huge fire place. The wooden tables range in size from 2 to 8 or more. There are benches on one side of a number of tables. There are black boards on the walls and that show the daily specials. There is also a black board with daily wine specials. There are also printed menus.

The décor is heavily wooded much like a traditional English tavern.

What makes this restaurant unusual is how you order your food. Once you are seated you are presented with a paper menu and then one of the party, in our case Florence, goes up to a window and places the order for drinks and food. After the order is placed the service is like a traditional restaurant.

Three of us started with Steamed Artichoke with Lemon Herb & Melted Butter. I opted for the Iceberg Wedge/House-cured Bacon and Hard-Boiled Eggs,

For our main courses Florence and Debbie ordered Dry-aged Ribeye steaks with sautéed Mushrooms.

Peter and I ordered Chicken Pot Pies which we savored.

We also ordered Curried Cauliflower w/Golden Raisins and Sweet Potato Chips.

For dessert Peter and I ordered Peppermint-stick Ice Cream with chocolate sauce. Debbie and Florence demurred.

One thing that jumped out at me from the menu were three types of burgers, beef, turkey or vegan veggie; three kinds of buns; and a selection of 11 toppings from fried farm egg to caramelized onions.

The service was very good and made more interesting by the fact that Peter strikes up a conversation with anybody who comes near us and the serving people were no exception.

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Tadich Grill
1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004
202-638-1849
www.icon.com

This restaurant is the progeny of the original Tadich Grill in San Francisco which is apparently the oldest restaurant in the city.

As you enter the restaurant, which is literally on the corner of 10th and Pennsylvania, the reception desk is dead ahead. On each side of the reception desk there are high stools at a bar, a dozen stools to the left and 4 stools to the right. There are also some tables at this level.

The physical décor is mahogany and brass railings like the original in San Francisco and a number of other restaurants in D.C.

To get to the main dining room you need to go up a couple of stairs to another level. The person at the reception desk, seeing that I was using a cane, noted that at the other end of the bar was a sloped path which allows one to get to the next level without using the stairs. I chose the two steps.

To the far right of the main dining area, separated by a $\frac{3}{4}$ tall wooden wall is the open kitchen. To the left of the kitchen there are two private dining rooms which are separate from the primary dining area. The dining area provides many options for dining. There are tables for 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10 and I suspect pretty much any length can be accommodated. There are banquettes on the end and one side.

On each side of the dining there are a series of booths for semi-private dining that comfortably seat 4 and squeezing a bit can handle 5 or 6.

The restaurant seats about 245 people plus a number of other seats on the patio on the Pennsylvania Avenue side of the restaurant which of course are only available in decent weather.

For starters Bob chose Coney Island Clam Chowder; Rita selected a salad composed of Half Avocado, Lettuce, Tomato and Pickled Onion; Rhoda, Debbie and Dan all had Caesar salads and I went for the Lobster Bisque with Lobster Meat.

For our main courses, Debbie and Dan opted for Cioppino including scallops, shrimp, clams, mussels, bay shrimp, whitefish, crabmeat with rich tomato sauce and garlic bread. Rita selected Jumbo Prawns in white wine with mushrooms, tomato, scallion, and lemon served with rice pilaf and vegetable. Bob had charcoal broiled Tuna Steak with mashed potatoes, vegetables and herb oil. Rhoda went for the Pan Roasted Rockfish with braised fennel and endive and roasted fingerlings, with a red wine-sherry gastrique and organdies. I had the Chesapeake Seafood Stew with crab cake, mussels, rockfish, shrimp, old bay-sherry cream with corn bread.

The restaurant's online menu lists Chilean Seabass, my personal favorite. Unfortunately, on the Friday, February 10th menu it was not included.

The extensive menu has seventeen Appetizers, three Soups, seven Classic Salads, six Entrée Salads, seven World Famous Louie Salads, nine Specialties of the House (all fish/seafood based) and with various sea foods dishes available cooked in a variety of ways, six from the Mesquite Charcoal Broiler, six that are

Pan Fried, three that are Sauteed (seven that are Baked en Casserole, and seven that are Deep-fried. And for those who do not want fish or seafood, there are nine non fish meats that are from the Mesquite Charcoal Broiler various meats. Of course there is a selection of seven desserts.

Getting to the men's room and the women's room is a bit of a journey. The entrance to the hallways that lead to the two restrooms is at the end of the restaurant and marked by a bright red exit sign.

The men's room is as expected given the décor of the restaurant. As you enter through the heavy wood door with an opaque window to the right are two individual white ceramic washbasins with individual mirrors above them. There is a single white ceramic hanging urinal in a walled but not enclosed area next to the large commode room. The commode room is large enough to accommodate all uses with appropriate bars. There is another smaller commode room at the other end of the restroom without the accessibility additions.

The floor is covered with large white ceramic tiles and the walls with much smaller white tiles.

The restaurant is open Monday–Saturday. Monday—Thursday the hours are 11:30 a.m. – 10 pm. Friday it is open from 11:30 a.m. – 11 p.m. and on Saturday it is open from 10:30 a.m. – 11 pm.

There is valet parking after 5 p.m.

Mike