

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 168

November 30, 2018

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Houston

Oxochi

Washington, D.C.

Fresh Baquette

Sababa

Spices

*Any statements in this issue of the Watch which are not sourced are mine and identified by “WW”.

State of the Nation

36% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction. 58% say it is on the wrong track. [CBS, 11/18/18]

In October, 38% of us were satisfied with the way things were going in the United States while 59% were dissatisfied. The satisfaction low point in the Gallup survey was 7% in October 2008 and the high point of 71% was reached in February 1999. [Gallup, 10/2018]

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October 2018 is 3.7%

If one considers 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 October 2018 is 7.4%.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for October 2018

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women – 3.0% (increase)

Men – 3.0% (same)

Unemployment by Race

White - 3.3% (no change)

Black – 6.2% (increase)

Hispanic – 4.4% (decrease)

Asian – 3.2% (decrease)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school – 6.0% (increase)

High School – 4.0% (increase)
Some college – 3.0% (decrease)
Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.0% (no change)

In September, 24 states had unemployment rates below the national average; one state had an unemployment rate that was exactly at the national rate of 3.7%; 25 states and D.C. had unemployment rates that were above the national average.

Alaska, at 6.5%, had the highest unemployment rate in the country. Louisiana, West Virginia and D.C. had unemployment rates of 5.0% or more but less than 6.0%. 17 states had unemployment rates that were 4.0% or greater but less than 5.0%, 4 states had unemployment rates higher than the national average but less than 4.0%.

[Bureau of Labor Statistics]

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Reported hate crimes in America rose 17% last year. 2017 was the 3rd consecutive year in which hate crimes have increased.

FBI data shows that various law enforcement agencies reported 7,175 hate crimes occurred in 2017; roughly 1,000 more than the 6,121 hate crimes reported in 2016. 3 out of every 5 hate crimes targeted a person due to race or ethnicity. 1 in 5 targeted a person due to religion.

4,000 of the reported hate crimes were directed at people, ranging from threats to intimidation to assault to murder. 3,000+ hate crimes were waged against property, from vandalism to robbery to arson. Anti-Semitic hate crimes grew by 37% in 2017 while anti-Islamic crimes declined by 11%. [WP, 11/13]

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This and That

Every piece of news, from almost every source now arrives first in a tweet. [WW]

Americans agree, we need a break from the news. “Seventy-seven percent of Republicans, who elected a president who can create a news cycle with a single tweet, feel that they need to take a step back. That view is shared by Democrats, with 70 percent saying they should take a break.”

The survey also found that white women (80 percent) are among the most likely to say that they need a break from the news, 12 points higher than white men (68 percent). [PRRI/The Atlantic]

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Starbucks' first US "signing store", embracing the deaf and hard of hearing community, has opened on the H Street corridor, just blocks away from Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. (Gallaudet is a university designed to be barrier free for deaf and hard of hearing students.)

This store, which employees say has been a dream since at least 2009, follows the coffee chain's first ever signing location which opened in Malaysia two years ago.

The store, located in an existing Starbucks, includes lower counter tops and more lighting to facilitate visual communication. The outpost also features tablets where customers can write their orders as well as screens to alert them when their drinks are ready. Other original touches include "Starbucks" written in sign language on aprons and in the window, a mural meant to encapsulate and celebrate deaf culture, and mugs designed by a deaf artist. [Washingtonian, 10/23/18]

(26% of the orders at my local Starbucks are by mobile device. WW)

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There will be 4.6 million American manufacturing jobs to fill in the next decade. 2.4 million of these jobs will go unfilled. The causes include the need for increased skill levels due to automation, the exit of baby boomers from the work force and the "negative perception" of the manufacturing industry. [Deloitte Consulting; MIT Technology Review]

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The number of children and teens treated in hospital emergency rooms for gunshot wounds in the United States averages 8,300 a year. 86% of the victims are male and the largest single affected group are boys age 15-17. [Johns Hopkins Medicine, 11/6/18]

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According to a new analysis of a study from the Pew Research Center, older people are worse than younger people at distinguishing facts from opinions.

When given ten statements, five facts and five opinions:

34% of 18- to 29-year-olds identified all five facts correctly, and 46 % identified all five opinions.

Of those 65 and older, 17% identified all five facts correctly and 21% identified all five opinions.

The research cuts against the notion that digitally native young people are more exposed and therefore more susceptible to misinformation. There is, however, a correlation with poor performance on the test and exposure to television news. [The Atlantic]

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64% of registered voters have last names that start with the letters A-M. So 36% of voters have last names that start with the letters N-Z. [WSJ, 11/17/18]

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6.5 million children live in food insecure households. [Another Good Thing, 6/21/18]

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Next year's White House Correspondents dinner will not feature a comedian. The White House Correspondents Association announced last Monday that author Ron Chernow will be the featured speaker on April 27.

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By the end of this year, it estimated that 33 million U.S. households will have stopped subscribing to pay television. As a result, traditional broadcasters have worked to roll out the streaming services of which 66% of Americans pay for at least one. [Hollywood Reporter, 10/17/18]

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Quotes

“We now know as surely as anything is knowable in human affairs that Trump is determined to be a force for division not for unity. He has no apparent interest in rising to the historical moment... Though Trump is a novel President, he represents- indeed embodies- ancient and perennial forces of political, racial and

cultural fear. Yes, America is the nation that produced Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King, Jr. It's also the nation that pursued and perpetuated enslavement and institutional racism to such a prolonged degree that it took a Tubman and a King to bring about a measure of justice. History and experience suggest that, in moments where care fails, we must undertake the duties of guardianship ourselves. We are living in just such a moment."

-John Meacham

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"The greater thou art, the more humble thyself."

-The Apocrypha

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"Where there is patience and humility, there is neither anger nor vexation"

-St. Francis of Assisi

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"When there is a gap between perception and reality it is only a matter of time until it is reconciled...in favor of reality"

"In the fund business, you get what you don't pay for."

"While rational expectation can tell us what will happen...they can never tell us when."

"I built a career out of knowing what I don't know."

-Jack Bogle

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"Live simply, expect little, give much. Fill your life with love, scatter sunshine. Forget yourself. Think of others and do as you would be done by."

-Norman Vincent Peale

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"Nervous as a turtle crossing a busy highway."

-Ana Navarro

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“The silence is just not acceptable any more. The old days of the '50s, of hiding your feelings and your desires and your dreams behind vacuum cleaners and perfectly applied lipstick and wax floors—hell, no!”

-Viola Davis

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President Trump

On November 18, 2018, CBS found that 39% of Americans approved of Trump’s job performance and 55% disapproved. Among those approving the president’s performance are 85% of Republicans, 7% of Democrats and 36% of Independents.

On November 25, 2018, Gallup found (among all adults) that 38% of Americans approve of President Trump’s job performance and 60% disapprove.

Gallup is no longer providing a daily approval rating of the president. In the future, these reports will be dated weekly.

I now include a periodic polling summary--Registered and Likely Voters--by FiveThirtyEight.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Gallup (All Adults)</u>		<u>FiveThirtyEight (Reg/Likely voters)</u>	
	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
11/25/18	38%	60%	42.9	52.3
11/18/18	43%	53%	--	--
11/11/18	38%	56%	--	--
11/4/18	40%	54%	--	--
11/1/18	--	--	42%	53.2%
10/28/18	40%	54%	--	--
10/21/18	44%	50%		
10/14/18	44%	51%	42.1	52.4%
10/7/18	43%	53%	--	--
9/30/18	42%	53%	41.5%	52.7%
9/2/18	41%	53%	--	--
9/1/18	--	--	40.3	54.4
8/1/18	--	--	41.4	52.9
7/29/18	40%	55%	--	--

7/1/18	42%	53%	41.8%	52.3
6/1/18	--	--	41.6%	52.7%
5/20/18	42%	54%	--	--
5/1/18	--	--	43.8%	52 %
4/8/18	41%	54%	--	--
4/1/18	--	--	41.4%	53.7%
3/11/18	39%	56%	--	--
3/1/18	--	--	42.7%	53.2%
2/11/18	40%	57%	--	--
2/1/18	--	--	42.0%	53.3%
1/14/18	38%	57%	--	--
1/1/18	--	--	39.5%	55.8%

The following are some additional looks at the President’s job performance. The numbers below are of registered voters unless followed by an “A” which means “all voters” or “L” which means likely voters. (QUPIAC = Quinnipiac)

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>NYT/CBS</u>	<u>FOX</u>
NOV’18	xxx	xxx	xxx	36/58cbsA	xxx
ELECTION 11/6					
NOV’18	46/52L	44/52	41/57L	XXX	XXX
OCT’18	45/52L	43/53	43/52	42/53	47/52L
SEP’18	44/52	xxx	36/58	xxx	46/52L
AUG’18	44/52	36/60	44/53	xxx	45/53
JULY’18	45/52	xxx	xxx	xxx	46/51
JUNE’18	44/53	xxx	41/54	42/52cbsA	45/51
MAY’18	xxxx	xxxx	44/51	40/55cbsA	xxxx
APR’18	39/57A	44/54	xxxx	xxxx	44/53
MAR’18	43/53A	xxx	42/54	38/57cbsA	45/52
FEB ’18	xx	xxx	39/56	xxx	43/53
JAN ’18	39/57A	38/58	43/53	37/58cbsA	45/53
DEC ’17	41/56	xxx	36/59	36/57 cbsA	xxx
JAN ’17	xxx	xxx	44/53	40/48cbs	xxx

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The following are job approval numbers from Gallup for the last nine presidents and Trump. As you can see, the only presidents to have worse numbers than Trump at this point in their tenures are Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton and both were re-elected.

Job Approval – Roughly 23 months into the 1st term

Kennedy	76% (12/62)
Eisenhower	69% (12/54)
GW Bush	63% (12/02)
GHW Bush	63% (12/90)
Nixon	58% (12/70)
Carter	50% (12/78)
Obama	47% (12/10)
Trump	44% (12/18)
Clinton	42% (12/94)
Reagan	41% (12/82)

On economic policy, Trump’s approval ratings have remained consistently positive since April.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
11/18/18	52%	41%	CBS News (A)
11/3/18	52%	44%	CNN (LV)
10/9/18	51%	42%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
10/2/18	47%	43%	Reuters/Ipsos (A)
9/9/18	51%	53%	CNN(RV)
8/21/18	49%	44%	Fox News
7/18/18	50%	34%	NBC/WSJ
6/5/18	49%	46%	Quinnipiac
5/6/18	50.3%	44.8%	RCP average 4/6-5/6
4/11/18	49%	46%	ABC/WP
3/11/18	46%	48%	CBS News
2/27/18	49%	44%	“
1/16/18	46%	49%	“

On foreign policy, Trump’s approval ratings remain in negative territory.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
11/19/18	42%	53%	Quinnipiac (RV)
11/3/18	42%	56%	CNN (LV)
10/9/18	45%	48%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
10/2/18	39%	49%	Reuters/Ipsos (A)

9/9/18	38%	56%	CNN (RV)
9/4/18	40%	51%	Reuters/Ipsos (A)
8/21/18	37%	55%	Fox News
7/23/18	38%	58%	Quinnipiac
7/18/18	38%	45%	NBC/WSJ
6/5/18	40%	52%	Quinnipiac
5/8/18	43.2%	52.6%	RCP average 4/20-5/8
5/6/18	45%	49%	CNN – Registered Voters
4/9/18	39%	55%	Quinnipiac
3/25/18	41%	52%	CNN
3/5/18	33%	61%	Quinnipiac
2/5/18	37%	57%	“
1/16/18	36%	60%	“

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About President Trump

Given the President’s record of total disregard for the truth, one has to question the content of any of his tweets. Why then, when Trump says something that is patently untrue, do so many media publications publish it anyway? [WW]

On November 19, 2018 the Washington Post published an article under the title of the Fact Checker. It reported on some 30 rallies headlined by the President and his claims on the size of the crowd.

At the end of the article, the writer Salvador Rizzo, wrote the following, “Let’s leave out all instances in which Trump said ‘thousands and thousands’ and focus only on the rallies for which he gave hard numbers or indicated rough totals. At nine such rallies this year the president’s estimates came to 352,600 people combined. Our review of official counts and news reports shows the number was much lower: 100,972.

“This means Trump multiplied his crowd sizes by a factor of 2.5 at a minimum. Of course, this doesn’t take into account all the times he made wild assertions about his crowd sizes without giving hard numbers.”

These claims were given Four Pinocchios.

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Accepting that it is a “bit” premature, here is an Axios/Survey Monkey poll taken of registered voters October 24-30 matching President Trump against a series of women, some of whom may actually be candidates in 2020.

			Point Lead	
Trump	42%	Michelle Obama	55%	+13
Trump	41%	Oprah Winfrey	53%	+ 12
Trump	42%	Kamala Harris	52%	+10
Trump	42%	Amy Klobuchar	51%	+9
Trump	44%	Kirsten Gillibrand	50%	+6
Trump	45%	Hillary Clinton	50%	+5
Trump	47%	Elizabeth Warren	49%	+2

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Trump has begun raising money for his re-election campaign earlier than any president since 1970.

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The president of Finland said he didn't talk to Trump about wildfires during their brief interaction earlier this month, contradicting the U.S. president's assertion that the Scandinavian nation spent “a lot of time on raking and cleaning” their forests. [[HuffPost](#)] (This response resulted from something the President said when he attacked management of the forests in California, a majority of which are on federal land. WW)

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On March 20, during Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit, Trump claimed the Saudi purchases of U.S. weapons he arranged would generate "over 40,000 jobs in the United States."

On Oct. 13, Trump mentioned the same arms deal as the reason he was reluctant to stop the arms sales. That time, he said the deal created 450,000 jobs.

On Wednesday, Oct. 17, during a Fox Business interview, Trump inflated the statistic to 500,000 jobs.

On Friday October 19, he increased the jobs number to 600,000.

A few hours later, on Friday evening at Luke Air Force Base in Arizona, Trump said the deal was worth 600,000 jobs for the military but "over a million jobs" in total.

The bottom line: From which source did Trump get these rapidly inflating statistics? I asked the White House press office. No response by deadline
 [10/21/18, Axios]

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Because the U.S. Senate remains in Republican hands and the filibuster is no more, the President can continue unchecked his goal of remaking the federal judiciary.

Nominated and Confirmed to Date

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>
Trump – thru 11/13/18	84	2	29	53
Obama – 8 years	329	2	55	268
GW Bush – 8 years	327	2	62	261
Clinton – 8 years	378	2	66	305
GHW Bush – 4 years	193	2	42	148
Reagan	383	3	83	290
Carter	262	0	56	203

[uscourts.gov]

There are currently 11 vacancies on the U.S. Courts of appeals, 112 vacancies on the U.S. District Courts and 2 vacancies on the U.S. Court of International Trade.

Nominations pending are 13 for the Courts of Appeals, 56 for the District Courts, 2 for the Courts of International Trade.

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Much ado was made of the fact that the White House pulled the permanent press pass of Jim Acosta of CNN. Following a lawsuit brought by CNN and the issuance of a federal judge’s temporary restraining order requiring that Acosta’s pass be returned to him, the White House decided to return his pass on a permanent basis.

It is important to keep in mind that the press has no more right to access to the White House than you or me. However, once a decision is made to allow the press access, then due process and the first amendment apply.

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Disassembling

Fulfilling President Donald Trump's midterm promise to crack down on undocumented immigrants crossing the southwest border, the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security published a rule last Thursday that will make it harder for immigrants to claim asylum if they are caught crossing the border between designated ports of entry.

Senior administration officials told reporters on a conference call that the president has the legal authority to do so because of sections of immigration law that allow the president discretion over who is admitted into the United States — the same language the administration used to support its travel ban in court.

The officials said the plan is to force more immigrants who wish to claim asylum to do so at designated ports of entry. Recently, many asylum seekers have chosen to cross illegally because they are kept waiting for days in Mexico due to backlogs at ports of entry.

In a joint statement, Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen and Acting Attorney General Matt Whitaker, said, "Consistent with our immigration laws, the President has the broad authority to suspend or restrict the entry of aliens into the United States if he determines it to be in the national interest to do so." (NYT,11/8/18)

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Way back when talks to renegotiate NAFTA began, the administration of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—a self-described feminist, appointer of a gender-balanced cabinet—made a bold, on-brand request: that the new agreement include a chapter on gender equality.

Now, as the specifics of the new, roll-off-the-tongue United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement or USMCA come to light, we're learning more about whether Canada achieved that goal.

The draft agreement falls short of the entire chapter Canada was after, but "we succeeded at getting gender discrimination, more broadly, included in the deal," a Canadian official told *Politico*.

The official's upbeat tone seems warranted. Buried in the massive agreement is wording that requires the three nations to take steps to protect workers against discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual orientation and—notably—gender identity.

"We viewed it as important to get gender identity included in the agreement," the Canadian official said. "It's a win for us."

Of course, news of the provision comes days after *The New York Times* reported that the Trump administration is weighing a new definition of gender that would be strictly based on sex organs at birth. The change could erase some existing protections for transgender individuals.

In that regard, the new NAFTA measure may still catch the attention of conservatives—the agreement is not yet final—but it's likely a hopeful development for a U.S. LGBTQ community that feels increasingly under attack. [*Politico*]

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The Trump administration is eyeing eradication of transgender recognition.

The New York Times reported that "HHS has for months considered defining gender as a biological, immutable condition determined by genitalia at birth under Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments Act", *Politico's* Caitlin Emma writes. "It would essentially erase federal recognition of and protections for transgender individuals." The 1972 law prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded education or training programs, including vocational programs that receive financial assistance from DOL.

"The administration is trying to essentially change the legal determination that transgender individuals are within the scope of the civil rights laws to begin with," Amit Narang of Public Citizen's Congress Watch told Morning Shift. "That will have systematic consequences for employees generally speaking if they identify as transgender." Cathryn Oakley, senior counsel at the Human Rights Campaign, told Morning Shift that the proposal is "incredibly alarming" and that she expects other agencies will follow suit. "HHS is encouraging other departments

to adopt it," Oakley said. "They can expect significant legal challenges." [Politico's Caitlin Emma]

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Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has announced sweeping rules on how colleges handle cases of sexual assault and harassment. She says she is fixing a “failed” and “shameful” system that is unfair to accused students.

The proposed new rules aim to “significantly enhance legal protections for the accused”. President Trump has expressed the view that men are unfairly presumed guilty.

Among the changes, the level of proof is raised from the “preponderance of the evidence” to “clear and convincing evidence.”

Students would be guaranteed the right to cross examine each other.

Victim’s rights advocates lambaste the new rules, saying they will have a chilling effect on reporting as survivors will not want to subject themselves to such a difficult process. [NPR, 11/16/18]

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2018

The following are indicators of the atmosphere in which the 2018 election was conducted.

The preference for the outcome of the November congressional elections was perfectly pegged in the NBC/WSJ survey of November 1-3.

Among likely voters, the preference was Democratic control 50%, Republican control 43%. There was little difference among registered voters where the preference is Democratic control 49% and Republican control 43%.

38% thought the country was headed in the right direction while 54% thought it was on the wrong track.

The President's job approval number was 46%/52% disapproval. The President had a positive feelings rating of 41%/52% negative.

The Republican party had a positive rating of 40%/45% negative, The Democratic party had a positive rating of 38%/43% negative.

40% of potential voters said their vote would be a signal of opposition to Trump. 32% said their vote would be a signal of support for Trump.

68% are satisfied with the state of the U.S. economy today. 74% are satisfied with their own financial situation today. [NBC/WSJ, 11/3/18]

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By the time it's over, the 2018 midterms will have smashed the previous midterm spending record with candidates spending a combined \$5.2 billion, according to a projection by the Center for Responsive Politics. The previous record for midterm spending was about \$4.2 billion in 2010, adjusted for inflation.

44 percent of U.S. firms gave workers paid time off to vote on Election Day, up from 37 percent in 2016. This is a perfect opportunity to point out there is absolutely no reason Election Day is not a national holiday or held on a weekend, as it is in most democracies, particularly when in 2014, 35 percent of registered voters who did not vote said they couldn't because of work or school obligations. [Bloomberg]

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The 2018 Election Scoreboard

U.S. Senate

Before the 2018 Election	51 Republicans/49 Democrats
After the 2018 Election	53 Republicans/47 Democrats

U.S. House

Before the 2018 Election	240 Republicans/195 Democrats
After the 2018 Election	198 Republicans/232 Democrats

The following is the CNN/PEW exit poll for the 2018 election.

	Democrats	Republicans
Men	47	51
College	47	51
Non-college	32	66
Women	59	50
College	59	39
Non-college	42	56
White	44	54
Men	39	60
Women	49	48
Black	90	9
Hispanics	69	29
Asian	77	23
18-29	67	32
30-44	58	39
45-64	49	50
65+	48	50

According to the AP VoteCast survey:

Women supported Democratic candidates by 57% to 41%
 Men supported Republican candidates by 61% to 46%.

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About Women

A record 256 women – 197 Democrats and 59 Republicans – ran for federal public office. 234 women ran for House seats and 22 women ran for Senate seats.

In the new House class there are 13 Republican women and 89 Democratic women.

U.S. Senate

Before the 2018 Election	17 Democrats/6 Republicans
After the 2018 Election	16 Democrats/6 Republicans (1 seat not decided)

U.S. House

Before the 2018 Election

64 Democrats/ 25 Republicans

After the 2018 Election

90 Democrats/15 Republicans

19 black women ran for Texas county judge posts. All of them won.

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The following is a chart comparing presidential approval on election day and the net Senate and House changes in that election.

<u>President</u>	<u>Mid-term</u>	<u>Pres Approval</u>	<u>Net House</u>	<u>Net Senate</u>
		<u>Election Day</u>		

Carter (D)	1978	52%	- 15 Dem	- 3 Dem
Reagan (R)	1982	43%	- 26 GOP	- 1 GOP
Bush 41 (R)	1990	58%	- 8 GOP	- 1 GOP
Clinton (D)	1994	46%	- 52 Dem	- 8 Dem
Bush 43 (R)	2002	63%	+ 8 GOP	+ 2 GOP
Obama (D)	2010	45%	- 63 Dem	- 6 Dem
Trump (R)	2018	40%	- xx GOP	+ 2 GOP

[Akin Gump]

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Governors

Before the 2018 Election

33 Republicans/ 16 Democrats

1 Independent

After the 2018 Election

27 Republicans/ 23 Democrats

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State Legislatures and Legislators

6 legislative chambers flipped from Republican to Democrat.

Minnesota is the only state in the nation where the legislature is divided. The Senate remains in Republican control and the House flipped to the Democrats. (The last time there was only one divided state legislature was in 1914.)

In 2008 there were 3,307 Republican legislators & 3,993 Democratic legislators

In 2010 there were 3,248 Republican legislators & 4,044 Democratic legislators

In 2015 there were 4,126 Republican legislators & 3,170 Democratic legislators

In 2018 there were 4,134 Republican legislators & 3,123 Democratic legislators

In the 2018 election roughly 350 Republican legislative seats flipped to Democrat.

In 2019 there will be 3,784 Republican legislators & 3,473 Democratic legislators.

(subject to some change)

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A Summary of the 2018 election.

“What the Democrats have yet to grapple with is what they need to do next and what is their strategy and message for 2019 and 2020. The victories that were hard fought and won deserve commendation, it was not won with a true national strategy or message.” [Peter Hart]

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Voter participation in the 2018 election was 49.2%. This was the highest level of midterm voter participation since 1914 when participation was at 50.4%.

Minnesota had the highest level of voter participation this year at 64.3%.

Hispanic participation in 2018 hit 11.0%, the highest level of participation recorded in a midterm election. The previous high was 7.0% in 2014. [Mehlman Castagnetti]

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Voter turnout in 2018 of 115.8 million was 28% higher than any previous mid-term election. The previous high turnout was 90,682,000 in 2010.

2018	115,800,000
2014	81,687,000
2010	90,682,000
2006	80,588,000
2002	79,830,000
1998	73,117,000

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Of the 42 House seats that have been flipped by the Democrats – 67% of them contain a Whole Foods Market. None of the 3 seats flipped by the Republicans contain a Whole Foods Market.

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Of the many changes in the political leadership of various congressional districts, one drew my attention more than others. It is the 3rd district of Minnesota, a collection of cities in the near suburbs of Minneapolis.

The district has been in the hands of Republicans since January 1961. The most recent incumbent is Congressman Erik Paulsen, who has represented the district since January 2009. In the just completed election, Democrat Dean Phillips defeated Paulsen garnering 55.72% of the vote.

You may be wondering why I am focused on this district. Here is the story.

I graduated from the University of Minnesota Law School in June of 1964 without setting any records. As I started looking for a job, I submitted an application to the Minnesota Attorney General, a fellow named Walter Mondale. I received a letter of rejection as fast as the post office could deliver it. Turns out they were only hiring folks who were on Law Review.

As I studied for the bar, I started doing some volunteer work in the Minneapolis congressional district. On one particular afternoon I was sent to a meeting being organized by Mondale who was the “Johnson for President” chairman in Minnesota.

During the course of the meeting, Mondale mentioned that they had not been able to find anyone to organize the registration and vote drive in the 3rd congressional district. The democratic congressional candidate running was a man named Richard Parrish who was not given much of a chance to win.

At the end of the meeting I went up to the front of the room and asked Mondale whether he would give me a job in his office if I went out and organized a registration and vote drive in the 3rd district and did a credible job. In desperation, he said yes.

The following Monday, I started work in the 3rd district. Without extending the story I apparently did a decent job. The Monday after the election I showed up at Mondale's office and he gave me a job as a Special Assistant Attorney General. Shortly thereafter Mondale was appointed by the governor to fill Humphrey's seat in the U.S. Senate. I stayed in the Attorney General's office. And thus began my career in politics.

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There was a new player in the Democratic electoral structure in the 2018 election: Mobilize America, a platform to connect campaigns with volunteers created by Alfred Johnson and Allen Kramer. Below is a summary of the organization's impact on the 2018 election.

776,196	volunteer shifts
363,637	shifts completed on behalf of candidates for the U.S. House
383,813	unique volunteers taking action
36.5	"million" unique voter contact attempts

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2020

Now that the 2018 election is past, it is time to shift focus to 2020.

The 59th presidential election will take place on November 3, 2020.

There is at least one big change in 2020; the California primary has moved from June 2016 to March 3, 2020. Even with that change, the relevance of California may still be limited. The cost of campaigning in California will be beyond the capacity of most candidates and if Senator Kamala Harris is in the game that would be another hinderance to mounting a campaign there.

The list of potential candidates from both parties will be sorted into three categories: "Announced/Running", "Testing the Waters" and "Mentioned".

The reason folks end up in the "Announced/Running" category is obvious.

The "Testing the Waters" category is for those folks who make some statement or take some action that suggests they are considering a candidacy such

as traveling to various early primary states or announcing in some fashion that they are testing the waters.

At this time, potential candidates are not required to file a campaign committee with the Federal Election Commission. The rules relating to limits on contributions from individuals, etc. do apply and internal records must be maintained. If and when a person decides to be a candidate for president, financial activity for this period must be reported.

The “Mentioned” category is for everyone else who gets mentioned, on their own behalf or by someone else.

When a person is excluded from a category, a line will be drawn through their name in the next issue of the Watch and in the subsequent issue it will be erased.

Democratic Primary

Announced/Running

Congressman John Delaney (D) – announced 7/22/17

Richard Ojeda, West Virginia – failed congressional candidate – announced

Andrew Yang – Entrepreneur - announced

Testing the Waters

Joe Biden (D) – former Vice President, former U.S. Senator

Cory Booker (D) – U.S. Senator

Tim Ryan (D) – U.S. Representative

Bernie Sanders (D) – U.S. Senator

“If it turns out that I am the best candidate to beat Donald Trump, then I will probably run”

Eric Swalwell (D) – U.S. Representative

Mentioned

~~Dwayne Johnson—Actor~~

~~Bob Iger—Disney~~

Howard Schultz – Founder & Exec. Chairman, Starbucks

Mark Cuban – Businessman and Owner, Dallas Mavericks

~~Kanye West—Entertainer~~

Tom Steyer – Billionaire philanthropist

~~Sheryl Sandberg, COO, Facebook~~
~~Mark Zuckerberg — CEO, Facebook~~
~~Oprah Winfrey — CEO, OWN~~
Michael Bloomberg – Businessman and former Mayor of New York
Michael Avenatti – Attorney, Attorney for Stormy Daniels
Al Sharpton – Civil Rights Activist
Oscar De La Hoya – former professional boxer
~~Andrew Cuomo (D) — Governor of New York~~
John Hickenlooper (D) – Governor of Colorado
Steve Bullock (D) – Governor of Montana
Jerry Brown (D) – Governor of California
Jay Inslee (D) – Governor of Washington
Gina Raimondo (D) – Governor of Rhode Island
Martin O’Malley (D) – former Governor of Maryland
Terry McAuliffe (D) – former Governor of Virginia
Deval Patrick (D) – former Governor of Massachusetts

~~Luis V. Gutierrez (D) — U.S. Representative~~
Seth Moulton (D) – U.S. Representative
Maxine Waters (D) – U.S. Representative
Tulsi Gabbard (D) – U.S. Representative
Joe Kennedy (D) – U.S. Representative
Beto O’Rourke – U.S. Representative
Amy Klobuchar (D) – U.S. Senator
Kamala Harris (D) – U.S. Senator
Kirsten Gillibrand (D) – U.S. Senator
Tim Kaine (D) – U.S. Senator
Elizabeth Warren (D) – U.S. Senator
Chris Murphy (D) – U.S. Senator
Sherrod Brown (D) – U.S. Senator
Mark Warner (D) – U.S. Senator
Jeff Merkley (D) – U.S. Senator
Bob Casey (D) – U.S. Senator
Lincoln Chafee (D) – former mayor, Rhode Island governor and U.S. Senator
~~Al Franken (D) — former U.S. Senator~~
Eric Holder (D) – former Attorney General
John Kerry (D) – former U.S. Senator, former Secretary of State, former presidential candidate
Hillary Clinton (D) – former Secretary of State, former Senator, former presidential candidate

Eric Garcetti (D) – Mayor of Los Angeles
Mitch Landrieu (D) – Mayor of New Orleans
Bill de Blasio (D) – Mayor of New York City
Pete Buttigieg (D) – Mayor of South Bend, Indiana
Julian Castro (D) – former Secretary of HUD

The Democratic nominating convention is scheduled for July 13-16, 2020 at a site to be determined.

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Republican Primary

Announced/Running

Donald Trump (R) – President

Testing the Waters

John Kasich (R) - Governor of Ohio (about to retire)

Mentioned

Don Blakenship (R) - Business Executive
Jeff Flake (R) - U.S. Senator (about to retire)
Larry Hogan (R) - Governor of Maryland
Bill Kristol (R) - Journalist

The Republican nominating convention is scheduled for August 24-27, 2020 in Charlotte, NC.

* * * * *

Here is an early 2020 Democratic primary poll by Morning Consult/Politico taken November 7-9, 2018

Joe Biden	26%
Bernie Sanders	19%
Beto O'Rourke	8%
Elizabeth Warren	5%
Kamala Harris	4%
Cory Booker	3%
Mike Bloomberg	2%

The following folks each garnered 1%: Andrew Cuomo, Gavin Newsom, Steve Bullock, Amy Klobuchar, Kirsten Gillibrand, Julian Castro, Sherrod Brown, Howard Schultz, Eric Garcetti

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Congress

Approval of the Congress generally remains in the tank although it has improved since the first of the year.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Poli. 11/20	20.4%	68.6
Real Clear Poli. 11/13	19.9%	69.3%
Real Clear Poli. 10/16	19.6%	71.4%
Real Clear Politics 9/5	18.4%	71.6%
Real Clear Politics 8/4	14.8%	73.5%
Real Clear Politics 7/5	15.7%	72%
Real Clear Politics 6/5	16.6%	70.6
Real Clear Politics 5/1	16.6%	72.6%
Real Clear Politics 4/2	13.6%	75%
Real Clear Politics 3/2	15.8%	72.6%
Real Clear Politics 2/4	16.2	73.9%
Real Clear Pol. 1/4/18	15.8%	72.6%

* * * * *

The U.S. House of Representatives has 435 members, a figure that has been fixed since 1920. This is in spite of an enormous expansion in the size of the country: initially the founders of the country wanted 30,000 people per representative, but today that ratio is almost 750,000 people per representative. The number of seats in a legislature is — in wealthy democracies — typically pretty close to the cube root of the population. In the US, that would put us at a legislature with 593 seats. Such an expansion would keep the general count of safe seats for each party in the same ball park, but would expand the middle considerably ...” *The Editorial Board, The New York Times*

[And where would they put the new seats in the U.S. House Representatives chamber? WW]

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2019

Democrats: 234 or 235
Republicans: 201 or 200

Democrats received 59,525, 244 (53.2% of the popular vote)
Republicans received 50,516,570 (45.1% of the popular vote)

According to David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report this was the largest gap between the two parties in the history of midterms.

* * * * *

The 2018 election included the youngest women ever first elected to the House of Representatives and the oldest woman ever first elected to the House of Representatives.

Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez, of New York's 14th district is the youngest woman ever to be elected to the House of Representatives. She will be 29 years old when she is sworn in.

Ocasio-Cortez won by winning the Democratic primary against a 20-year House veteran Joe Crowley, Chairman of the Democratic Caucus in the House.

Casio-Cortez was endorsed by progressive and civil rights organizations such as MoveOn, Justice Democrats, Brand New Congress, Black Lives Matter, and Democracy for America.

Crowley was endorsed by Governor Cuomo, U.S. Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio, 11 U.S. Representatives, 31 local elected officials, 31 trade unions, and progressive groups such as the Sierra Club, Planned Parenthood, the Working Families Party, NARAL Pro-Choice America and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, among others.

There were roughly 236,000 registered democrats in the 14th district. The results of the election – Ocasio-Cortez 15,897 votes; Crowley 11,761 votes, a turnout of 11.8% of the democrats.

Donna Shalala, of Florida's 27th district, is the oldest woman ever elected to the House of Representatives. She will be 77 years old when she is sworn in.

Shalala won an open seat following the retirement of Republican Ileana Ros-Lehtinen who retired after 30 years in office.

Shalala had a heck of a career before deciding to run for Congress.

1977 – Became the Assistant Secretary of Policy Development and Research of HUD

1980 – President of Hunter College

1988 – Chancellor of University of Wisconsin – Madison

1993 – Secretary of Health and Human Services

2001 – President of the University of Miami – thru 2015

* * * * *

Apparently wanting to get an early start on “relations” with her soon to be colleagues, “Rep.-elect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) has urged other progressives to mount primary challenges against some conservative Democratic members of Congress.” [[HuffPost](#)]

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THE SENATE

[WW is using Jennifer E. Duffy and the Cook Political Report for the Senate chart below. 11/15/18]

In 2020 the Republicans will be defending 22 seats while the Democrats will be defending 12 seats.

Republicans	53
Democrats	45
Independents	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Seats not up in 2020	23	31
Safe in 2020	10	16

	Coons	Sullivan
	Durbin	Cotton
	Markey	Risch
	Peters	Ernst
	Shaheen	Roberts
	Booker	Cassidy
	Udall	Hyde-Smith
	Merkley	Daines
	Reed	Sasse
	Warner	Inhofe
		Graham
		Rounds
		Alexander
		Cornyn
		Moore Capito
		Enzi
Likely	1	3
	Smith	Perdue
		McConnell
		Tillis
Lean	1	3
	Jones	AZ TBD
		Gardner
		Collins

* * * * *

Women Will Get It Done

According to the CNN exit poll, of the 650,000 black women who voted in Florida this year, 18% of them – roughly 117,000 - voted for Republican Ron DeSantis who was elected governor. Only 9% of them – roughly 58,500 – voted for Rick Scott, the Republican U.S. Senate candidate (who was also elected).

DeSantis' margin of victory was roughly 34,000 votes over Democrat Andrew Gillum, a black man who was leading in pre-election polls.

So why did 58,500 more black women vote for DeSantis to provide him with the margin of victory? The answer is school choice.

More than 100,000 low-income students in Florida participate in the “Step-Up for Students” program, which grants tax-credit funded scholarships to attend private schools. Most Step-Up students are minorities whose mothers are registered Democrats.

DeSantis supported school choice and apparently Gillium opposed it.

The Democratic mothers whose students participate in the Step-Up program voted for their children. [Article by William Mattox, WSJ, 11/22/18]

* * * * *

“Sixty percent of women who will serve in the next Congress are Girl Scout Alums.” [USA Today]

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In Nevada during the just-past election, voters abolished the tampon tax. This is the 10th state to eliminate sales tax on menstrual products. [Vox, 11/8/18]

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The Subtle Stressors Making Women Want to Leave Engineering

Female retention in engineering remains a persistent problem. Even after overcoming hurdles to enter the profession, women leave at much higher rates than men, often because of the stress that comes with being female in a male-dominated field. This stress can be quite overt, like when women face instances of gender discrimination or harassment; but our research shows that it can also be subtle, like when women feel that their contributions are less valued than their male peers’ because tasks and roles have been gendered. When experienced daily, this kind of subtle stress can become depleting. [Teresa Cardador and Brianna Ceza - Harvard Business Review] [Gender Avenger Blog, 11/25/18]

* * * * *

A study by McKinsey & Co. and LeanIn.Org found that women and men have different perceptions of how gender factors in the workplace, with 29 percent of women saying their gender makes it harder to get a raise, promotion or career advancement compared to 15 percent of men who say their gender holds them back. Men were more likely than women to say promotions at their company are based on fair and objective criteria (50 percent of men versus 43 percent of women). Moreover, 29 percent of women said they have been addressed in a less-than-professional way compared to 14 percent of men, 32 percent of women said

they had been mistaken for someone at a much lower level (10 percent of men) and 40 percent of women said they had experienced having their judgement questioned in their areas of expertise (compared to 23 percent of men). [Vanessa Fuhrmans, *WSJ*]

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Restaurants

Houston

XOCHI

1777 Walker Street
Houston, Texas 77010
713-400-3330

In the Marriott Marquis Hotel

Debbie and I went to this restaurant with Steve, Rachel, Max, Coby, Jen, Ben, Abby, Eli, William, Dale and Susan.

As you enter the restaurant there are sections of tables to the right and left and just past the entrance there is an L shaped bar that seats 21 people. Overall the restaurant seats 190 people inside and another 60 people on the patio. There are a series of 2, 4, 5, 6 tops as well as larger tables including the one at which we were seated.

Our table of 13 people was just inside entrance.

There were simply too many different choices to designate who ordered what. So here is a list of everything that was ordered, most of which were shared by at least a couple of people.

Queso De Rancho – house made queso de cincho which includes a trio of insects, grasshoppers, worms and ants.

Taquitos Dorados – chicken picadillo, mole coloradito etc

Molotes De Xoxocotlan – oval masa cakes, potato, chorizo ismeno, avocado etc.

Pulpo – crispy wood-roasted octopus, masa pancake, toasted pumpkin seeds, etc

Codorniz – bacon-wrapped quail stuffed with Chorizo, etc

Barbacoa De Res De Zaachila – grilled roll skirt steak, potato, carrots masa dumplings etc

Pato Crujiente – crispy duck, tomatillo avocado sauce, chicharrones

Coliflor – roasted cauliflower, chintextile
Elote Cremoso – sweet creamy corn and rice
Calabaza – Roasted acorn squash, goat cheese, pumpkin seeds, pomegranate
Hongos – wild mushrooms, more Amarillo, masa dumplings, green beans
Tamal De Polo Con Mole Negro – large chicken tamal with black mole
Ensalada De Otono – roasted pumpkin, yellow beets, squash, green, quince, pear vinaigrette, pumpkin seeds
Ensalada Roja – red lettuces, red beets, dried figs, candied pecans, apple, pomegranate dressing
Enchiladas
Guacamole

The restaurant is pretty loud but not insufferable. And I could not hear the conversation at nearby tables.

The service was attentive and swift, especially given the size of the restaurant.

The floor in the men's room is covered with a zig zag pattern of dark gray and white. The doors and walls are gray. There is a commode room with a white ceramic commode. As you enter there is a brown wooden shelf with a white square ceramic wash basin headed by a mirror. Opposite the wash basin is a white wall-hanging urinal.

There is valet parking at the entrance to the Marriott Marquis.

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Washington, D.C.

Fresh Baguette
1737 Wisconsin Avenue – D.C. 20007
202-333-2598
4919 Bethesda Avenue – Bethesda, MD 20814
301-656-0000
804 Hungerford Drive – Rockville, MD 20850
301-417-8628
Open every day – 7AM-7PM

Fresh Baguette recently opened a third store on Wisconsin avenue in Georgetown at a location that Debbie and I pass several times a week. One Sunday morning with Carol joining us we made a stop.

The store is relatively small but does have limited seating for those who look forward to the offerings of an authentic French bakery.

We did not take advantage of the seating that first day and have not done so since – the chairs in the dining area of the bakery seem a bit modest for me – but Debbie and/or I have stopped several times for our own pleasure. We have also found that the various pastries make a perfect gift when we have been invited to someone's home.

Here is a partial list of the kinds of treats you can salivate over at all three Fresh Baguette locations: traditional baguettes, sesame, poppy, multi-seed, baguettes, whole wheat loaf, raisins and walnut loaf, stuffed rolls such as Bacon/Swiss cheese or olive; chocolate, almond, almond chocolate croissants; apple chaussons, brioche knot, brioche knot with Nutella, queen tart; fruit tarts, lemon meringue tarts, napoleons, eclairs, flans, various macarons; canneles, madeleines, meringues, brownies, berry crumble bars, cookies, muffins; homemade quiches, croque ham, ham and cheese croissants.

There is also a full selection of biscuits, mustard, page, chestnut cream, cornichons, carambars, malabars and jams.

My personal preference is the brioche bread loaf, although there is nothing I have tried that I would not happily eat again.

* * * * *

Sababa
3311 Connecticut Ave
Washington. DC 20008
202-244-6750
Fax 202.244-8960
info@sababaupstown.com

First it was Ardeo + Bardeo. Two restaurants side by side and interconnected. Then Ardeo closed and Bardeo became Bindaas offering Indian Street food. Then Ardeo reopened as Sababa, a stylish bistro for Israeli fare.

Debbie and I went to Sababa with Michael and Sherry who had been to the restaurant before.

As you enter the restaurant, dead ahead is a bar with 12 high seats. At the end of the bar there is an open area which leads directly into Bindaas.

To the right starts a series of 2s, 4s & 6s. There are couple of banquets with 4 tops. There is grass growing out of the wall on the right as you come in.

The restaurant seats up to 130 people on two levels. There is a steep set of stairs to the second floor. I did not venture up the stairs.

It is loud but more like a “din”. You cannot hear the actual conversations of tables near you. The general lighting is quite low...there were a number of folks using lights on cellphones to read the menus.

The restaurant offers a variety of non-alcoholic drinks. Debbie ordered Pomegranate-Rosehip Soda/Sumac, Rose and Fenugreek.

Mike and Sherry had Lavender-Borage Soda/Rosemary & Lemon. I ordered Grapefruit-Cardamom Soda/Black Petter & Lime.

We shared everything, as is encouraged on the menu.

Large plates:

Vegetable Tagine/ charred vegetable, herbed couscous & Tomato
Lamb Shank/ braised red cabbage with dates & citrus

Small plates:

Charred Eggplant/ herbed labne, pomegranate & pistachio
Israeli salad/ cucumber, tomato, onion, avocado & watermelon
Fried Cauliflower/ tahini, golden raisins, dill & lemon
Smoked Trout/ muhammara, walnuts, grilled cucumber

Desserts:

Halva-Chocolate Pot De Crème/ almond brittle, date molasses & Chantilly
Konafi Cake/ shredded filo, apricot labne filling, pistachio whipped cream

Mike suggested ordering the small plates first and then wait a while to order the large plates. Otherwise the some of the large plates may be delivered before you finish with the small plates.

The service was first rate.

There are two gender identified restrooms down a well-lit corridor at the back of the restaurant on the first floor.

As you enter the men's restroom, directly to the left is a wall-hanging urinal. Further to the left is a commode room with partial black metal walls and door. Across from the commode room is a black ceramic counter with two oval white ceramic washbasins sunk in the counter. Above the counter is a large mirror.

Covering the floor and the walls of the urinal area and the commode and the floor are tiles with multi pointed black tiles with white backgrounds...to shoulder height. Above shoulder height and around the main door are covered with painted tan walls. There is a waste can near the door. The inside of the door is black.

Hours – Open every day at 5:00 p.m.
Open till 10:00 p.m. Sunday – Thursday and
11:00 p.m. Friday – Saturday
Saturday & Sunday Brunch – 11:00 a.m.

* * * * *

Spices
3331 Connecticut Avenue NW
Washington DC 20008
202-686-3833

Debbie and I went to Spices with Rita and Bob. Rita suggested the restaurant. The restaurant seats 96 people at various 2, 4 and 6 tops plus 12 seats at the bar.

We ordered Edamame – Whole green soy bean pods, steamed & lightly salted for the table.

Bob ordered Miso soup – Tofu, seaweed & scallions. I ordered Seabass Spring Rolls, crispy spring rolls filled with Chilean sea bass & shitake mushrooms. While I ate most of the spring rolls a couple of the others had bites.

For the table we ordered:

Whole duck – served with pancakes, cucumbers, scallions and plum sauce;

Crispy Shumai – homemade open-faced dumplings with chicken, shrimp and shitake mushrooms;

Bulgogi Kimchi Fried Rice – Korean style spicy fried rice with grilled thin slices rib eye steak and Kimchi, served in hot stone pot;

Vegetables Hot Pot – Cellophane noodles, Napa cabbage, scallions, onions, carrots

The men's room floor is covered with rectangular wooden strips and very large tiles covering the walls. There is a white ceramic wall-hanging urinal to the left as you enter the restroom. Across the room are two wall-hanging white ceramic rectangular wash basins with a mirror above them. Dead ahead as you enter is a commode area with a grey metal wall and door, open at the bottom and top. In this area there is a white ceramic floor mounted commode.

Mike

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202- 728-1100

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