

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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May 24, 2019

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Congress – page 20

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Restaurants – page 24

Washington, DC

Et Voila!

Menlo Park, CA
Madura

San Francisco, CA
Acquerello
Scoma's

(San Francisco restaurants in next WW issue: Mourad, Garibaldi's and Eliza's)

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

State of the Nation

37% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction. This includes 39% of men and 29% of women. 56% say it is on the wrong track including 47% of men and 57% of women. [Economist/YouGov 5/14/19]

In March, 31% of us were satisfied with the way things were going in the United States while 67% were dissatisfied. [Gallup 4/9/19]

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As the Trump administration carries on trade negotiations, and as the presidential campaign heats up, Americans will do well to remember that there is no greater threat to the success of our national enterprise over the next quarter-century than mismanagement of the relationship with China. It is not just possible but essential to be strong and resolute without being imprudent and provocative. [Larry Summers 5/15/19]

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50% of U.S. adults belong to a church or other religious institution. This number has plunged by 20 points over the last two decades. According to Gallup, church membership fell among Democrats from 71% to 48% over those 20 years. The drop among Republicans was from 77% to 69%. Over the last two decades the percentage of U.S. adults with no religious affiliation has jumped from 8% to 19%. [Axios 4/18/19]

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17% of Americans say they can trust the government in Washington to do what is right, including 21% of Republicans and leaners and 14% of Democrats and leaners. Since the 1970s, trust in government has been consistently higher

among members of the party that controls the White House. [PEW Research 4/11/19]

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73% of Americans have only some/no confidence at all in the federal government’s ability to prevent foreign countries like Russia from directly interfering in our elections. 25% have a great deal/quite a bit of confidence in the governments ability to prevent foreign interference. [NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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One-third of middle-class American adults couldn’t afford a \$400 surprise expense and some 6% also couldn’t manage such a cost even by borrowing money or selling something. [Federal reserve 2018 survey of household economics, WSJ 5/11-12/19]

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10,000 Americans turn 65 years of age every day. [WSJ 5/10/19]

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Social Security will face insolvency in 16 years. If uncorrected, it will require a 20% across the board cut for all Americans who rely on the program. The Medicare hospital insurance trust fund will runout in 2026. [Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget 4/22/19]

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The share of 16-year-olds who get their driver’s license is down 20.2% between 1983 and 2017, dropping down from 46% in the 1980s to 26% in 2017. In 2017, only 80% of 20-24-year-olds were licensed drivers. [WSJ 4/19]

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There is broad base support for LGBT protections across various religious traditions.

	<u>Favor these protections</u>
Unitarian/Universalist	90%
New Age religion	86%
Jewish	80%
Hindu	79%
Buddhist	75%
Hispanic Catholic	72%
White Mainline Protestant	71%
White Catholic	71%
Mormon	70%

Other non-white Catholic	68%
Other non-white Protestants	61%
Muslim	60%
White Evangelical Protestant	54%
Jehovah's Witness	53%

[PRRI 2018 American Values Atlas]

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According to an annual Gallup poll of more than 150,000 people around the world, Americans are among the most stressed-out people on Earth. 55% of them said they experienced stress during “a lot” of the previous day. That compares with 35% of stressed out folks globally. [NYT 4/26/19]

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Demography of the United States:

	<u>White</u>	<u>Non-White</u>
1960	85.4%	14.6%
1980	79.6%	20.4%
2000	76.4%	23.6%
2020	66.7%	33.3%
2032	59.5%	40.5%

Percentage of Democrats who call themselves liberal:

1994	25%
2018	51%

Number of days between a person's first election and their first Time Magazine cover:

John F. Kennedy	3,987
Newt Gingrich	5,788
John Boehner	7,242
Marco Rubio	778
Nancy Pelosi	11,431
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez	89

After 27 months in office, here are approval numbers for various U.S. Presidents, by their own party and the other party.

	<u>Own Party</u>	<u>Other Party</u>
Trump	89%	8%
Obama	80%	18%

G W Bush	95%	50%
Clinton	73%	18%
G H W Bush	94%	68%
Reagan	78%	23%
Carter	52%	22%
Nixon	77%	23%
Johnson	59%	28%

[The Roaring 2020's: The Coming Decade of Disruption & Reform- Bruce Mehlman]

Note: There are a variety of newsletters and reports on which WW relies: Cook Political Report, Inside Elections, NBC/WSJ poll, Axios, BLS, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal and a variety of other newspaper and information repositories. Now WW has added one more source, a report prepared and distributed by Bruce Mehlman. The item directly above is from Mehlman's latest publication. To find it online the link is <http://bit.ly/Roaring2020's>. If you would like to be added to the distribution list for future reports, you can reach Bruce at bruce@mc-dc.com.

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for April 2019 is 3.6%.

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 is 7.3%.

263,000 jobs were created in April. [BLS 5/3/19]

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The Demographics of Unemployment for April 2018

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women – 2.8% (decrease)

Men – 2.9% (decrease)

Unemployment by Race

White – 3.1% (decrease)

Black – 6.7% (increase)
Hispanic – 4.2% (decrease)
Asian – 2.2% (decrease)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school – 5.4% (decrease)
High School – 3.5% (decrease)
Some college – 3.1% (decrease)
Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.1% (increase)

In March 2019, 27 states had unemployment rates below the national rate; 3 states had an unemployment rate that was exactly at the national rate of 3.8%; 20 states and D.C. had unemployment rates that were above the national rate.

Alaska, at 6.5%, had the highest unemployment rate in the country. Arizona, New Mexico, West Virginia and D.C. had unemployment rates of 5.0% or more but less than 6.0%. 13 states had unemployment rates that were 4.0% or greater but less than 5.0%. [Bureau of Labor Statistics]

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In the second week of April of this year, fewer Americans filed for unemployment benefits than at any time since 1969. Claims for jobless aid fell by 5,000 last week to 192,000, the lowest since September 1969. [AP]

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African American workers have received far smaller pay increases in recent years compared to other racial groups. This is true even though unemployment among African Americans is trending at historic lows. Although overall unemployment was 3.8%, it was 6.8% among African Americans.

For all workers, inflation adjusted, median weekly earnings rose 5.3% in the first quarter of 2019.

	<u>Growth</u>
Hispanics	11.3%
Asian	10.0%
Whites	6.8%
All	5.6%
African Americans	1.6%

[WSJ 4/17/19]

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1 of 8 American workers and 1 of 7 Europeans are highly vulnerable to automation and will require retraining. [OECD/Axios 5/12/19]

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U.S. births have fallen to the lowest rates since the 1980s.

Last year, the number of babies born in the U.S. fell to a 32-year low, deepening a fertility slump that is reshaping America’s population and future workforce. About 3.79 million babies were born in the country in 2018, according to provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The general fertility rate—the number of births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 44—fell to 59.0, the lowest since the start of federal record-keeping.

Overall, births still outnumber deaths in the U.S.—by more than one million in 2017, the most recent year for which the CDC has data on both. But that margin isn’t spread evenly across the country. About 43% of the nation’s 3,142 counties had more deaths than births in the fiscal year that ended in June 2018, Census Bureau estimates show. That’s up from about 33% of counties in the year ended in June 2010. Such “natural decrease” can weigh heavily on the economy in rural areas that combine an aging population with a loss of young people who have sought employment in cities.

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This and That

6,227 pedestrians died in traffic accidents in 2018 according to the Governors Highway Safety Association, the highest number in three decades. Experts attribute the rise to “drivers and pedestrians distracted by their phones” and an increase in large vehicles. [NPR]

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There are about 40 species of bats living in the United States. Worldwide, there are more than 1,300 species of bats. [WP 4/17/19]

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We sit. A lot. Because computers are fun to look at. According to research in the journal of the American Medical Associations, total sitting time for American adults and teens increased from about 6.4 hours a day in 2007 to 8.2 hours in 2016, he wrote, seated at his computer. [The Verge]

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41% of global health spending is spent on 4.4% of global population. [Vitals 4/29]

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Students

Over the past five years, about 20 college campuses have closed every month, the overwhelming majority of which — 88 percent — were for-profit institutions. In the past six years, 2,300 students were displaced by public universities closing, 80,000 were displaced by private non-profit universities closing, and a devastating 451,000 students at for-profit colleges were displaced as a result of those businesses folding. Enrollments in for-profit schools is falling drastically, all while enrollment at public and non-profit colleges remains unchanged. [Noah Smith, Bloomberg]

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By 2045 the U.S. will become majority minority. In 2020, the entire under 18 population will be majority non-white. In less than 10 years the under 30 population will be majority non-white. [Axios 4/29/19]

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In 1934, after 145 years of congressional activity, the U.S. code consisted of one volume of federal statutes. In 1970 there were 11 volumes. In 2019 there are 41 volumes plus 242 volumes of regulations having the force of law. [George Will quoting James Buckley, WP 5/2/19]

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DVDs are on the way out. In the 4th quarter of 2015, \$2.2 billion worth of DVDs were sold. In the 4th quarter of 2016 that number had dropped to \$1.9 billion. At the same time in 2017 that number was \$1.5 billion. A year later the number was \$1 billion. In the most recent quarter for which there is data the number was down to \$0.8 billion. [Numlock News 4/30/19]

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56% of Americans rate their financial situation as excellent/good while 57%

think their financial situation as a whole is getting better and 66% say they have enough money to live comfortably. [Gallup 4/30/19]

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Feelings toward each of the major political parties are more negative than positive. 35% are positive about the Republican party and 42% are negative. As for the Democratic party, 34% have positive feelings toward the party while 39% have negative feelings. [NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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72% of folks think that parents should be required to vaccinate their children for diseases like measles, mumps, and rubella. 25% believe that parents should be able to decide whether or not to vaccinate their children. [NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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Recently, The Council of Independent Colleges spring newsletter featured an interview with Peter Hart who was in his 45th year of a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellowship (the longest serving fellow).

As part of his interview he was asked the following by interviewer Roger Bowen, “In your long and distinguished career, you must have done polls that produced results that surprised you. Can you tell me about a situation when findings were unexpected or showed a big shift in public attitudes?”

Hart replied, “The most amazing thing I’ve seen in American public opinion has concerned attitudes toward same-sex marriage. I started measuring this in 1989. In the late 80s and early 90s, American attitudes were overwhelmingly negative against same-sex marriage. One of the things I discovered through polling was that people who knew someone who was gay had totally different attitudes than people who didn’t.

“Only a small portion of Americans thought they knew someone who was gay then, but as people got to know more, attitudes shifted more in 15 years on that one issue than on any other issue I have measured. To me, it was a tremendous revelation and gratifying to see how open the American public became.”

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Social Media

Recently PEW Research Center did a study of how Twitter is used by U.S. adults who use the platform. And who, in general, is online and who is not online.

- 80% of tweets are sent by 10% of the tweeters. The bottom 90% of tweeters send 20% of the tweets.
- The median adult tweeter posts 2 tweets a month.
- The most prolific adult tweeters are likely to be women.
- Of those in the top 10% by number of tweets, 65% are women.
- Women account for 48% of less prolific users.

Do not use internet

- 48% in 2000
- 10% in 2019
- 10% of adults/10% of men/9% of women
- 8% of whites/15% of blacks/14% of Hispanics
- Ages: 0% of those 18-29
- 3% of those 30-49
- 12% of those 50-64
- 27% of those 65+
- 18%/those earning less than \$30,000 per year
- 2% of those earning \$75,000+
- 9% of those living in urban areas
- 6% of those living in Suburbia
- 15% of those living in Rural areas

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Researchers from Oxford University have determined that by the year 2100, under a conservative scenario where no new users join the social network, 1.4 billion Facebook users will be dead. And by 2070 the dead will outnumber the living. These startling truths of mortality highlight social networks' "wider efforts to grapple with the thorny problem of what to do with dead people." [MIT Technology Review]

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Quotes

“One loyal friend is worth ten thousand relatives.”

--Euripides

“Let me tell you something, being thought of as a beautiful woman has spared me nothing in life. No heartache, no trouble.”

--Halle Berry

“Speaking generally, all part of the body which have function, if used in moderation and exercised in labors to which each is accustomed, become thereby healthy and well developed, and age slowly, but if unused and left idle, they become liable to disease defective in growth and age quickly.”

--Hippocrates 370 BC

“Beautiful places lift us from the drudgery of everyday life – the laundry, the kids fighting at bath time – and point us toward the divine. Whether or not you’re a person of faith, Notre Dame bestowed upon most people who crossed her threshold the great gift of feeling that there is something much bigger than themselves.”

--Emily Robichaud, a Providence-based writer and design historian

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President Trump

On May 1st the NBC/WSJ survey found that 46% approve of the job that Trump is doing as president. 53% disapprove of the job that he is doing.
[NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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On May 14, 2019, Economist/YouGov found that 39% of Americans approved of Trump’s job performance and 50% disapproved.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Men	43%	46%
Women	35%	56%
18-29 yrs	27%	58%
65+	51%	46%

(Gallup no longer provides a daily or weekly approval rating of the president. Gallup now assess presidential job approval on a monthly basis.)

I now include a periodic polling summary—Registered and Likely Voters—by FiveThirtyEight. Note that year over year there has been little or no change in Trump’s approval although there have been movements up to 7% points in Gallup.

<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>
5/12/19	42%	52%	42.4%	52.4%
4/9/19	45%	51%	42%	52.7%
3/10/19	39%	57%	41.8%	53.4%
2/10/19	44%	52%	40.2%	55.1%
1/27/19	37%	59%	40.4%	55.6%
12/22/18	39%	55%	42.2%	52.8%
11/4/18	40%	54%	42.2%	52.6%
10/14/18	44%	51%	42.1%	52.4%
9/30/18	42%	53%	41.5%	52.7%
9/2/18	41%	53%	40.3%	54.5%
7/29/18	40%	55%	41.2%	53.2%
7/1/18	42%	53%	41.8%	52.3%
5/12/19	43%	52%	42.1%	52.0%
1/14/18	38%	57%	--	--

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”.

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>CBS</u>	<u>FOX</u>
MAY’19	46/51				46/53
APR’19	xxx	42/54	44/53	xxx	45/51
MAR’19	43/53A		43/51		46/51
FEB ’19	46/52A	xxx	42/54	xxx	46/52
JAN ’19	43/54A	38/58	37/57A	36/59A	43/54
DEC ’18	43/54A	xxx	39/52	xxx	46/52
JAN ’18	39/57A	38/58	43/53	37/58A	45/53
DEC ’17	41/56	xxx	36/59	36/57A	xxx
JAN ’17	xxx	xxx	44/53	40/48A	xxx

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39% of Americans have positive feelings toward President Trump while 49% have negative feelings toward him. The high point of this measurement was in February 2017 when 43% had positive feelings toward the President and the low point was in April 2018 when only 35% had positive feelings toward him.
[NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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The following are job approval numbers from Gallup for ten of the last twelve presidents, roughly 28 months into their first term.

GHW Bush	77% (5/91)
Eisenhower	68% (5/55)
Kennedy	64% (5/63)
GW Bush	66% (5/03)
Nixon	50% (5/71)
Clinton	51% (5/95)
Obama	49% (5/11)
Trump	42% (5/19)
Reagan	43% (5/83)
Carter	37% (5/79)

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

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
5/14/19	48%	46%	Fox News (RV)
4/16/19	47%	46%	Reuters/Ipsos (A)
3/26/19	50%	45%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
3/4/19	49%	45%	Quinnipiac (RV)
2/2/19	49%	45%	CNN (RV)
1/1/19	47%	46%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
12/6/18	48%	42%	CNBC (A)
11/18/18	52%	41%	CBS News (A)
10/9/18	51%	42%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
9/9/18	51%	53%	CNN (RV)
8/21/18	49%	44%	Fox News
7/18/18	50%	34%	NBC/WSJ
1/16/18	46%	49%	NBC/WSJ

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

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	
5/14/19	43%	49%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
4/16/19	39%	52%	Reuters (A)
3/26/19	44%	50%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
2/19/19	44%	50%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
1/1/19	42%	51%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
12/11/18	42%	51%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
11/19/18	42%	53%	Quinnipiac (RV)
10/9/18	45%	48%	Econ/YouGov (RV)
9/9/18	38%	56%	CNN (RV)
8/21/18	37%	55%	Fox News
7/18/18	38%	45%	NBC/WSJ
1/16/18	36%	60%	NBC/WSJ

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Donald Trump embraced Hungary’s prime minister at today’s White House meeting. Viktor Orban has flirted with authoritarianism and undermined democratic institutions in the country as part of his self-proclaimed goal of creating an “illiberal democratic” state. The praise from the president (Trump) isn’t all that surprising. Trump’s own hand-picked ambassador in Hungary told Franklin Foer that “knowing the president for a good 25 to 30 years...he would love to have the situation that Viktor Orban has.” [Atlantic 5/13/19]

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60% of Americans do not think that Donald Trump has been honest and truthful when it comes to the investigation into Russian interference with the 2016 presidential election and related matters. 37% think he has been honest and truthful.

29% think that the Mueller report clears Trump of any wrongdoing. 42% say it does not clear him. [NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

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.

Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>
Trump – thru 5/21/19	108	2	41	65
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

There are currently several nominations awaiting Senate action: 2 seats on the Courts of Appeals, 63 seats on the District Courts and 2 seats on the Courts of International Trade.

There are currently 4 vacancies on the U.S. Court of Appeals, 122 vacancies on the U.S. District Courts and 4 vacancies on the U.S. Court of International Trade. [USCourts/Wikipedia]

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Disassembling

Trump has issued an executive order seeking to speed up oil and gas pipeline projects by making it harder for states to intervene. [WP 4/10/19]

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As many as 44.7 million Americans have student loan debt. The total amount of student loan debt is \$1.47 trillion as of the end of 2018. Most Americans with student loan debt are young. But adults 60 and older are the fastest growing cohort among student loan borrowers. The number of Americans over the age of 60 with student loan debt has more than doubled in the last decade. [NBC News 4/24/19]

The Trump administration has done everything possible to undercut the vitality and capability of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Recently the Department of Education is helping to undercut the capacity of the CFPB to police the student loan industry. The problem is that the student loan servicers are refusing to share information that the CFPB says it needs to perform proper oversight. The loan servicers are not providing the information based on guidance from the Department of Education. [NPR 5/16/19]

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This month, the administration signaled it would like to change how the government adjusts its official poverty threshold for inflation every year, which could result in millions fewer Americans qualifying for a wide range of benefits over time. [HuffPost 5/13/19]

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On the eve of the recent discussion with China about trade, President Trump falsely claimed that the U.S. collects “over 100 billion a year in tariffs.” In fact, the U.S. collected \$41 billion in fiscal year 2018 and has collected \$34.7 billion through the first six months of this fiscal year. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projects that the U.S. will collect \$74 billion in 2019. [Fact Check 5/8/19]

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The administration is moving ahead with a plan to restrict visitor visas for nationals of countries with high overstay rates, including potentially barring their entry entirely. Cabinet officials have been ordered to draw up recommendations for nationals of countries that have an overstay rate of 10% or more. [WSJ 4/23/19]

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In Donald Trump’s America, state and federally funded adoption agencies and other child welfare agencies (CWAs) can openly violate anti-discrimination laws and openly flout the “best interests of the child” standard that governs American family law and can legally refuse to place children with anyone they religiously disapprove of including gays, Catholics or Jews. [The Daily Beast 4/9/19]

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DHS issued a final rule protecting individuals and entities that want to opt out of care due to their religious beliefs. It explicitly mentions abortions, sterilization, assisted suicide, and advance directives as issues and will allow them to refrain from having to provide, participate in, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for, such services. [WP 5/2/19]

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2020

The 59th presidential election will take place on November 3, 2020,
529 days from today

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53% of Americans would like to amend the constitution so that in the future presidential elections are determined by whomever gets a majority of the national vote. 43% of Americans would like to continue using the Electoral College.
[NBC/WSJ 5/1/19]

As of April 2019, 14 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation supporting the manner in which we select the President. These 14 states and the District represent 189 electoral votes of the 270 that are necessary to make this happen.

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As of May 19, 2019, there are 24 people who have announced that they are running for the Democratic nomination and are included in most widely published lists. Two people have announced they are running for the Republican nomination.

(Actually, 716 people have filed with the Federal Election Commission to run for President; 244 Democratic candidates, 91 Republican candidates, 26 Libertarian candidates and 14 Green candidates.)

Included in the broadly reported list of 24 Democratic candidates, is Mike Gravel. He is 88 years old and last ran for president in 2008. On March 19, 2019, Gravel announced he was running in 2020 and on April 2nd he filed a presidential campaign committee with the Federal Election Commission. Gravel was apparently encouraged to run by a couple of teenagers from New York, who run his Twitter account and arranged the filing with the FEC.

Gravel has made it clear that he is not really running for President, rather he is “running” to get on the debate stage by meeting the minimum qualifications. Gravel said on April 22nd that he had already met the 200 donors from at least 20 states and was on track to meet the 65,000 unique donors, requirement.

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Announced/Running/Formed Committee

Michael Bennett (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 54
Joe Biden (D) – former Vice President, former U.S. Senator – Age 76
Cory Booker (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 49
Steve Bullock (D) – Governor of Montana – Age 53
Pete Buttigieg (D) – Mayor of South Bend, Indiana – Age 37
Julian Castro (D) – Former HUD Secretary – Age 44
John Delaney (D) – former U.S. Representative – Age 55
Bill DeBlasio (D) – Mayor of New York, New York – Age 58
Tulsi Gabbard (D) – U.S. Representative – Age 37
Kirsten Gillibrand (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 52
Mike Gravel (D) – former U.S. Senator – Age 88
Kamala Harris (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 54
John Hickenlooper (D) – Governor of Colorado – Age 67
Jay Inslee (D) – Governor of Washington – Age 68
Amy Klobuchar (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 58
Wayne Messam (D) – Mayor of Miramar, Florida – Age 44
Seth Moulton (D) – U.S. Representative – 40
Beto O'Rourke (D) – former U.S. Representative – Age 46
Tim Ryan (D) – U.S. Representative – Age 45
Bernie Sanders (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 77
Eric Swalwell (D) – U.S. Representative – 39
Elizabeth Warren (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 69
Marianne Williamson – Spiritualist, teacher – Age 66
Andrew Yang – Entrepreneur – Age 44

Testing the Waters

Howard Schultz – Founder & Exec. Chairman, Starbucks – Age 65 (May run as an Independent)

Mentioned

Stacy Abrams (D) – former candidate for Governor of Georgia – Age 45
Mark Warner (D) – U.S. Senator – Age 64
John Kerry (D) – former U.S. Senator, former Secretary of State, former presidential candidate – Age 75

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There are various actions used to describe each candidate's entry into the 2020 presidential race for the Democratic nomination: starting an exploratory committee, filing a campaign committee with the Federal Election Commission,

and becoming publicly active in ways that garner media attention without spending much money. Harry Enten of CNN uses the term “entered the race” which WW is adopting. The following chart is based on the surveys of Morning Consult.

	<u>Entered the race</u>	<u>5/20/19</u>
Joe Biden	4/25/19	39%
Bernie Sanders	2/19/19	19%
Elizabeth Warren	12/31/18	9%
Kamala Harris	1/21/19	8%
Pete Buttigieg	1/23/19	6%
Beto O’Rourke	3/14/19	4%
Cory Booker	1/1/19	3%
Amy Klobuchar	2/10/19	1%
Julian Castro	12/12/18	1%
Tulsi Gabbard	1/11/19	1%
Kirsten Gillibrand	1/15/19	1%
John Hickenlooper	3/4/19	1%
Steve Bullock	5/14/19	1%
Bill de Blasio	5/16/19	1%
Andrew Yang	11/6/17	1%
Tim Ryan	4/4/19	1%
Michael Bennett	5/2/19	1%
John Delaney	7/28/19	1%
Jay Inslee	3/1/19	0%
Wayne Messam	3/13/19	0%
Seth Moulton	4/22/19	0%
Marianne Williamson	11/15/18	0%
Mike Gravel	4/2/19	0%
Eric Salwell	4/8/19	0%

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The Democratic nominating convention is scheduled for July 13-16, 2020 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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Democratic Debates of the 2020 Nomination Season

1st Debate – June 26 & 27 in Miami, Florida

2nd Debate – July 30 & 31 in Detroit, Michigan

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Republican Primary

Announced/Running

Donald Trump – President – Age 72

William Weld I – former Governor of Massachusetts – Age 73

Testing the Waters

Larry Hogan I – Governor of Maryland – Age 62

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

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Congress

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Congressman Don Young (R-AK) has become the longest-serving Republican in the House of Representatives, surpassing the record held by the former Speaker of the House Joseph Cannon (R-IL) who once observed, “The House is the most peculiar assemblage in the world and only a man who has had long experience there can fully know its idiosyncrasies. It’s true we engage in fierce combat. We’re often intense partisans. Sometimes we are unfair yet, I venture to say that nowhere else will you find such a ready appreciation of merit and character.” [Speaker Pelosi 3/6/19]

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Approval of the Congress generally remains in the tank.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 5/14/19	22.0%	66/2%
Real Clear Pol. 4/2/19	22.8%	66.8%
Real Clear Pol. 3/26/19	20.8%	68.8%
Real Clear Pol. 2/26/19	19.4%	70.0%
Real Clear Pol. 1/1/19	19.6%	69.3%
Real Clear Pol. 1/4/18	15.8%	72.6%

* * * * *

[WW uses Jessica Taylor and the Cook Political Report for the House chart below.]

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2020

Democrats 236
Republicans 200

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Safe in 2020	183	162
Likely	18	19
Lean	18	14
		<u>Toss Up</u>
	17	4

* * * * *

THE SENATE

[WW uses Jennifer E. Duffy of the Cook Political Report and Inside Elections for the Senate chart below.]

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

Gary Peters moves from Safe to Likely, Joni Ernst moves from Safe to Likely.

The hill the Democrats must climb to take control of the Senate looks pretty steep at this point.

Republicans	53
Democrats	45
Independents	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Seats not up in 2020	33	31	2
Safe in 2020	8	12	
	Coons	Sullivan	
	Durbin	Cotton	
	Markey	Risch	
	Shaheen	Cassidy	
	Booker	Daines	
	Merkley	Sasse	
	Reed	Inhofe	
	Warner	Graham	
		Rounds	
		Cornyn	
		Moore Capito	
		Enzi	
Likely	3	5	
	Smith	McConnell	
	NM (Udall)	Tennessee	
	Peters		
		Kansas	
		Hyde-Smith	
		Ernst	
Lean	0	3	
		Collins	
		Perdue	
		Tillis	
Toss Up	1	2	
	Jones	McSally	
		Gardner	

* * * * *

Women Will Get It Done

Nevada is the first state in the nation in which a majority of the legislators are female. [WP 5/17/19]

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For almost 20 years, Melinda Gates has been on a mission to make the world better. When she and her husband launched the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000, they knew only that they wanted to use their Microsoft wealth to stop children born in poverty from needlessly dying of ailments that were easily cured in developed nations. Since then, their mandate has evolved to include curing disease, developing and delivering new medications, lifting communities out of poverty, and increasing access to opportunity and education. A few years ago, Gates realized one thing unified all those goals: empowering women.

She is not alone. Experts working on the world's biggest problems agree that by helping women, you help everyone. Want to solve climate change? Empower women. Lower infant mortality? Empower women. Cure AIDS? Empower women. Make your company more profitable? Empower women. The list goes on. [GenderAvenger Blog 5/10/19]

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Since the grassroots organization known as “500 Women Scientists” launched its searchable database, more than 8,500 researchers from at least 133 countries have signed on to be contacted as experts by journalists, conference organizers and teachers. [Stat News 4/24/19]

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'The Year of the Lesbian Mayor'

That's how Annise Parker, former Houston mayor and current president of the LGBTQ candidate-backing Victory Fund, hopes we'll look back on 2019. And with the Tuesday election of former Tampa police chief Jane Castor to the city's top office, it looks like Parker may get her wish.

Castor's win follows that of Chicago's Lori Lightfoot and Satya Rhodes-Conway in Madison, Wisconsin earlier this month, bringing the number of gay women to be elected mayor in the 100 biggest U.S. cities to three so far in 2019. (And there could be more to come; Jolie Justus is in a June 18 runoff race in Kansas City, Missouri.)

Their victories bring the total number of out lesbians ever elected to lead one of the 100 biggest U.S. cities from two—Parker and Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan—to five, and the number of out LGBTQ people to have ever been elected mayor of a top 100 city from six to nine. Overall, there are now 38 LGBTQ mayors in the U.S.

The trio has also achieved a host of boundary-breaking firsts. Castor is the first openly LGBTQ candidate elected mayor of a major southeastern U.S. city. Lightfoot is Chicago's first gay mayor *and* its first black female mayor. Rhodes-Conway is Madison's first LGBTQ mayor—and became so after defeating a 22-year incumbent.

Reflecting on Castor's win, Parker told the media: "While voters chose Jane because of her vision for Tampa, her willingness to be open and honest about her life lent her an authenticity that voters are drawn to not just in Tampa, but across the nation." [Fortune Magazine]

* * * * *

Restaurants

ET VOILA!

A classic Belgian French Bistro
5120 Macarthur Blvd NW
Washington, DC 20016
202-237-2300

Debbie and I went to Et Voila with William, Susan and David for an early dinner.

As you enter the restaurant, to the left there is a large three-sided square bar with highchairs. Folks can also sit here for dinner. There is other highchair seating in this area. Toward the rear of this area is a tall, 10 seat chef's table.

To the right is a long corridor that reaches to the back of the restaurant that houses a variety of tables that can be 2s, 4s, 6s and other combinations. The kitchen is located at the end of corridor.

Our table for 6 was the last table in the corridor right next to the entry to the kitchen.

There are a variety of dishes that can be ordered as an appetizer or entree.

Susan ordered the Warm Goat Cheese Salad, tomato & olive brioche/mixed tomato chutney as an entree. Debbie had the Cheese Omelet with Ham and Mushrooms, Organic Eggs from Path Valley Farm/ Belgian Frites /Green Salad. William had the Burger "Paint Hill Farm" Ground Beef, Chimay cheese/ bacon/confit tomato / onions/ French fries. David chose the Scottish Trout Tartare,

Tobiko eggs / shallots/ chives/ Olive oil/ Marinated Nameko/Lime/ Caviar/Wasabi Mayonnaise.

I started with French Onion Soup with Baked Gruyere Cheese. If you are a French onion soup aficionado, a visit to this restaurant just for the soup is worth the trip. I followed with the Lobster Burger/ Belgian Frites /Aioli sauce.

For dessert I ordered ice cream and the others ordered six profiteroles to share. I was able to enjoy a bite or two.

This turned out to be one of those meals where everyone enjoyed the what they had ordered, and the service was excellent.

As the evening wore on, the restaurant became quite noisy.

I am going to find a time to try the brunch. I particularly look forward to the Stuffed Lump Crab Waffle or the Eggs Gratin Bechamel.

The restaurant seats 80-90 people. And while it can feel bit crowded it is quite comfortable. Apparently, lunch time is often as busy as dinner. Reservations for dinner are easier to come by on the early side of the evening and toward the latter part of the evening.

Reservations are not always necessary, but you should make one to be certain. Lunch is served Tuesday–Sunday, dinner is served every night. Brunch is served Saturday and Sunday. For specific hours check the website.

There are two unisex restrooms about two-thirds of the way back in the restaurant.

The floor and the walls are covered by large gray tiles. On one wall there is a large framed photograph of a tree. In one corner there is a square tile table in which there is a sunken square white ceramic wash basin with an oval mirror above it. There is a white ceramic floor-based commode and across from it there is a circular aluminum waste disposal can. There are a variety of steel safety bars at waste height. There is a brown wooden door and a floor to ceiling wooden cabinet with doors.

There was convenient street parking on both sides of the street.

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MADERA RESTAURANT
Rosewood Sandhills Hotel
2825 Sandhills Road
Menlo Park, CA 9425
650-561-1500
Sandhill@Rosewoodhotels.com

The Sandhill is a 121-room hotel with guest rooms in a series of cottages, most of which hold 4 guest rooms. The cottages and the main part of the hotel include public areas, large and small event spaces, a classic bar and a restaurant surrounding a large swimming pool.

The Madera Restaurant is a large multi-room dining area in the main building. Debbie and I stayed a weekend at the hotel and enjoyed breakfast on our first full day having arrived late the night before.

In the main dining room as well as several adjoining more private dining areas there are large windows facing the outside. There is both indoor and outdoor seating. There are circular tables of up to 6, 2 and 4 tops, as well as several banquettes and leather couches.

Debbie started with her usual black coffee and orange juice followed by a dish called Quinoa – Breakfast Potatoes, Scrambled Eggs, Salsa Verde, Tomatoes and onions.

I started with 4 shots of espresso followed by Challah Bread French Toast served with sliced Bananas and Walnuts. (In my view – French toast made with Challah is the best French toast.)

All in, indoor and out, the restaurant seats up to 200 people. The whole place, the hotel proper and the restaurants, exude freshness.

The restrooms servicing the restaurant are in the hotel proper.

As an aside, all of the hotel staff from the reception desk, to the concierges, to the front door staff to the folks managing the restaurant were particularly friendly and helpful.

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ACQUERELLO
1722 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
415-567-5432
Fax 415-567-6432

Debbie and I went to Acquerello with Stan and Julia. Going to a restaurant in San Francisco with Stan is a unique experience and this was no exception.

While the main room of the restaurant can seat up to 50 – 60 people, on this night it was set for 44 people.

There is substantial room between each table, which means you can hear the folks who are at your table without straining and you are not interrupted by overhearing the conversations from other tables.

Acceptable dress seems to be anything goes. The night we were there we saw a couple with the woman in a beautiful cocktail gown and the man in a three-piece suit and at the next table to them a young woman and man in what has been described to me as California casual.

Our table for four was at the back of the restaurant with Julia and Debbie on a banquette.

I cannot recall a restaurant at which we have had better service. And I wondered whether the service was special because of Stan. But as I looked around, other tables were experiencing similar service.

For reasons that remain unclear, Stan ordered a steak knife. The knife was provided in a manner that I had not seen before. A small wooden holder was placed on the table and the steak knife was placed in with the cutting edge placed in a slit at the top of the holder.

The following is what each of us ordered.

First course:

Julia – Brassica and spouted chickpea salad with black shallot and preserved lemon

Debbie – Aged Liberty duck cured under red wine pomace, heirloom carrots

and vin cotto

Stan and Mike – Grilled Spanish Mackerel with “Giardiniera” of pickled vegetables

Second course:

Julia – Dungeness crab risotto with asparagus, cured egg yolk and oxalis
(Julie only ordered two courses)

Debbie passed

Stan and Mike – Rabbit “Culurgiones,” artichoke, candied olive, green garlic and guanciale

Third course:

Debbie – Spring Hen with rhubarb, speck, fava bean, pink peppercorn and herb velouté

Stan – Willamette Valley lamb with grilled sunchoke, sweetbreads, brioche, and mustard

Mike – Olive poached ocean trout, butternut squash, Brussels sprouts, red onion, pancetta

We shared three additional dishes that were not on our menu, but two of which were on the Seasonal Tasting menu. From the tasting menu: Baked bufala milk ricotta, summer squash, cherry tomato and basil and Ridged pasta with faux “foie gras”, black truffle and Marsala. The third dish, which was not on any menu, was Lobster Ravioli and Lobster sauce.

Then there is dessert:

Julia ordered Bourbon-caramel semifreddo, Amaretti crust, chocolate, and caramel sauce.

Debbie ordered Vanilla gelato with 25 year aged Balsamic and roasted strawberries.

I ordered Buttermilk panna cotta with Apricot and almond.

No hard liquor is served but the wine choices seem to be endless. The sommelier is a big Stan fan so throughout the night he was offering Stan tastes (as if he knows the difference from one wine to another).

The restaurant is not inexpensive but worth it. There is a prix fixe menu; Three course - \$105, Four courses - \$130, Five courses \$150. Of course, wine is extra.

There are two private rooms, one that seats 8 and another that seats 16.

The restroom is quite dark with both walls and floor covered with large tiles. There is a floor based white ceramic commode and a wall hanging white ceramic washbasin with a mirror above it. An open metal rack near the washbasin has a neat pile of cloth towels. There is a small table with a light configured marble top. It holds a burning candle and holder, sprays and tissues along with two leather backed chairs. The décor of this restroom fits the restaurant: classy.

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SCOMA'S
1954 Al Scoma Way
San Francisco, CA 94133
415-771-4383
Fisherman's Wharf

Debbie, Stan and I stopped at Scoma's for lunch while sightseeing.

The restaurant is on edge of the water. There are boats in whichever direction you look.

There are a variety of eating locations in this restaurant including a traditional bar with high stools, leather booths, tables and chairs. We were seated, at Stan's request, in a semi-circle area at the end of the restaurant with the water right below. There the furniture was more casual but quite comfortable. There is also an outside eating area weather permitting which it usually does.

Our server was Maria who has worked there for 18 years.

We had a substantial plate of calamari fritte crispy squid with lemon and oregano tarter & cocktail sauce for the table. Debbie selected steamed manila clams – clam juice, garlic, onions, red chili flakes and white wine, butter.

Stan and I each ordered a bowl of Scoma's clam chowder Boston white. This may have been the best clam chowder I've ever eaten. I also ordered grilled calamari ladolemono whole calamari filled with spinach, ricotta, garlic, lemon, olive oil.

I look forward to a more fulsome dinner at a future time.

It is hard to calculate just how many people the restaurant will hold and the folks I asked were a bit confusing. Suggestions ranged up to 300 which seemed a bit excessive.

As you enter the restroom, straight ahead there is a curtain covering a wall-hanging washbasin and a wall-hanging urinal with a partial wall between them. Just past the urinal there is another partial wall with a door that encloses a floor based white ceramic commode. There is also a baby changing shelf that pulls down from the wall. Topping the commode are rolls of extra toilet paper. The floor is covered with small white tiles and the walls with large whitish tiles. There are appropriate accessibility bars in this area.

Mike

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