

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 194

September 18, 2021

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

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State of the Nation

30% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction.
58% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right track</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Democrats	60%	27%
Republicans	9%	89%
Independents	19%	68%

[Econ/Yougov 8/31/21]

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A record number of women, nine, are currently serving as state governors.
This ties a record previously set on three occasions.

45 women have served or are serving as state governors.

19 states have never had a woman governor. Six of those states have never seen a major party nominate a woman in a gubernatorial election, although in one of those states, Minnesota, nine consecutive lieutenant governors have been women since 1983.

In addition, women are currently serving as chief executives of Washington, D.C. and Guam. [Wikipedia 8/24/21]

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The FBI has released 2020 hate crime statistics. The 2020 data is from the FBI release of data from 2016.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2016</u>
Victims targeted because of:		
race/ethnicity/ancestry bias	61.9%	57.5%
sexual-orientation bias	20.5%	17.7%
religion bias	13.4%	21.0%
gender identity bias	2.5%	2.0%

disability bias	1.0	1.2%
gender bias	0.7%	0.5%

[FBI Hate Crime Statistics 2020/2016]

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The last time more than 50% of Americans thought the war in Afghanistan was worth fighting was in December 2009.

As of September 1, 2021, 54% of Americans say the war was not worth fighting.

68% of Americans support the United States taking in refugees from Afghanistan. [WP/ABC 9/1/21]

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54% of Americans are mainly worried and pessimistic about the future of the country while 44% are mainly hopeful and optimistic. In April of 2020, 61% were hopeful and optimistic. [NBC 8/17/21]

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For the first time, the number of Americans who identify as white has declined between 2010 and 2020 having grown from 1980 to 2010.

15% of U.S. adults say that the declining share of white people in the United States is good for society. This includes 29% of those 18-29 years of age but only 6% of those 65 years of age and older. 61% say these changes are not good or bad. [PEW 8/23/21]

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A new study by the Tax Policy Center showed that 61% of Americans did not pay federal income taxes in 2020 and the top 20% of Americans paid 78% of federal taxes in 2020 and the top 1% paid 46.4% of all federal income taxes, up from 37.5% in 2019.

This same group is projected to pay almost 50% of all federal income taxes in 2021. [Winston Group 8/25/21]

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54% of Americans believe that abortion should always be legal or legal most of the time. 34% believe it should be illegal with exceptions, and 8% believe it should always be illegal.

Here is how this question is answered by various groups within the community.

	<u>Legal</u>	<u>Illegal</u>
18-34 years	65%	32%
18-44 years	60%	37%
65+	48%	49%
Latinos	63%	35%
Blacks	55%	39%
Whites	51%	46%
Women	59%	38%
Men	49%	47%
Urban	65%	34%
Suburban	54%	42%
Rural	33%	63%
Northeast	65%	34%
West	65%	31%
Midwest	49%	48%
South	43%	53%

[NBC News poll 8/17/21]

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How does society deal with people who are transgender?

29% of Americans think the country has reached a reasonable balance when it comes to accepting transgender people. However, 38% believe the country has not gone far enough, while 26% believe the country has gone too far.

Since 2016, the number of people who say the country has gone too far has dropped from 33% to 26% and the number of people who say the country has not gone far enough grew from 33% to 38%. However, the number of folks who think the country has reach a reasonable balance has not moved. [NBC poll 8/17/21]

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According to data from a Census Bureau survey, 6% of renters nationwide – more than 3.5 million people say they are “likely or very likely” to face eviction, being unable to pay their rent because of the pandemic.

The percentage of all adult renters, in the 50 states + DC who say they are facing eviction in the next few months ranges from 16.1% in Louisiana to 0.4% in Utah. In 6 states the percentage ranges from 16.1% to 10%: in 20 states it ranges from 9.6% to 5.2%: in 14 states it ranges from 4.7% to 3.1%: in 11 states it ranges from 2.8% to .04%. [NBC News 8/27/21]

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Adults in each of the following countries were asked if they had a favorable or unfavorable view of the United States. The 8/14 date is before Kabul fell. The 8/24 date is 9 days after Kabul fell on 8/15.

	Favorable		Unfavorable	
	<u>8/14</u>	<u>8/24</u>	<u>8/14</u>	<u>8/24</u>
Australia	50%	49%	35%	35%
Brazil	77	72	9	12
Canada	41	41	48	44
China	24	18	72	77
France	46	50	29	26
Germany	47	46	36	38
India	80	79	8	10
Italy	58	54	24	29
Japan	58	53	20	23
Mexico	69	67	13	14
Russia	43	41	38	42
South Korea	59	60	24	25
Spain	53	51	29	34
United Kingdom	46	42	33	39

[Morning Consult 8/26/21]

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The Washington Post-Ipsos poll conducted an interesting online poll among a random national sample of teens between 14 and 18 years of age and their parents or guardians. The survey was conducted between May 7 and June 15, 2021. The following are a number of findings of that survey.

Among 14–18-year-olds (Teens)

43% are confident that the country's best years are still ahead of us

53% are concerned that America's best years may be behind us

Is this a good time for teenagers to be growing up?

Teens

48% think this is a good time

51% think this is a bad time

Parents

37% think this is a good time

62% think this is a bad time

Among teens

90% think it likely that they will achieve a good standard of living

46% think that their opportunities to succeed in life are better than their parents

16% think their opportunities are worse than their parents

Among teens

What percentage of teens see each of the following as a major threat?

Political divisions 59%

Gun violence 57%

Cost of health care 57%

Racial discrimination 57%

Terrorism 53%

Climate change 49%

Lack of career opportunities 34%

Immigration 30%

What political party do teens feel closer to

Republican party 22%

Democratic party 29%

Neither 49%

Teens feel that their parents are closer to

Republican party 32%

Democratic party 34%

Have different views 12%

Do you think that each of these groups are treated unfairly today because of who they are?

	<u>Teens</u>	<u>Parents</u>
Black people	61%	58%
Transgender people	60%	60%
Gay and Lesbian people	56%	54%
Immigrants	56%	58%
Hispanic people	50%	49%
Asian people	48%	48%

[WP/Ipsos]

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24% of Americans rate the current state of the economy as excellent/good while 74% see it as only fair/poor. In December 2020, those seeing it as excellent/good was 34% and in April 2017 – excellent/good was at 38%. [NBC News poll 8/17/21]

Here is how Americans see various individuals or organizations when it comes to their approaches to issues in August 2021.

	<u>In the mainstream</u>	<u>Out of Step</u>
Joe Biden	44	52
Donald Trump	42	54
Democrats in Congress	42	54
Republicans in Congress	36	57
Bernie Sanders	31	61
Survey respondents	71	23

Three years ago, in August 2018, Democrats and Republicans in Congress scored the same as they did in August 2018.

In July 2016, a larger share of the Democrats in Congress, were seen as more in the mainstream while a smaller number of Republicans were seen in the mainstream.

[NBC News poll 8/17/21]

50% of Americans oppose while 48% favor requiring that everyone who is eligible must get the COVID-19 vaccine. [NBC News poll 8/17/21]

There is considerable support for masks and vaccine requirements in schools, at businesses, and other indoor places.

- 67% support and 30% oppose – school districts requiring teachers, staff, and students to wear masks
- 59% support and 39% oppose – teachers and staff to be vaccinated
- 54% support and 44% oppose – students to be vaccinated if a vaccine is approved for their age
- 67% support and 32% oppose – state or local orders requiring masks indoors in public places
- 52% support and 45% oppose – businesses requiring that employees who come into work to be vaccinated. [WP 9/5/21]

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54% of Americans say that the United States decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan was the right decision. But 69% say that the U.S. failed to achieve its goals in that country. 71% rate the job the Biden administration has done as only fair/poor. 61% of Republicans and 33% of Democrats see Taliban control of Afghanistan as a threat to the security of the United States. [PEW 8/29/21]

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60% of adults in America think the threat of terrorism against the United States will increase while 36% believe it will stay the same now that the Taliban is in control of Afghanistan. [CBS News Poll 8/20/21]

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86% of Americans say that the events of 9/11/2001 had a lasting effect on the United States. 49% of Americans see the United States as safer from terrorism than it was before the terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001. When asked the same question ten years ago, 64% said the United States was safer.

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2021</u>	
All	64%	49%	-15
Democrats	66	57	- 9
Republicans	69	41	- 28
Independents	64	52	- 12

[ABC New/WP 9/1/21]

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66% say that the 9/11 attacks changed America forever, 29% say the changes will not be permanent while 5% say there was no real change. 88% of Americans feel sad when they think about the 9/11 attacks, 75% feel angry, 65% express disbelief, and 49% are scared.

42% of us say we are a lot/somewhat personally affected by the attacks while the remaining 58% say they are not much/not at all personally affected.

Among those who remember 9/11, if there were a terror attack today 20% think Americans would be more united than after 9/11, 40% think we would not be as united than after 9/11, while 34% think Americans would be as united as after 9/11. [CBS News poll 9/9/21]

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July was the hottest month ever recorded on Earth – which NOAA calls an “unenviable distinction.” [Axios.com 8/14/21]

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for August 2021 is 5.2%. That unemployment rate is lower than the 5.4% in July and substantially less than the 8.5% unemployment rate of August 2020.

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 in August was 8.8%, down from 9.2% in July and substantially less than 14.3% a year earlier.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is 61.7%, up from 61.6% in July 2021.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for August 2021

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –4.2% (down from last month)

Men –4.4% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Race

White – 4.5% (down from last month)
Black – 8.8% (up from last month)
Hispanic – 6.4% (down from last month)
Asian – 4.6% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school – 7.7% (down from last month)
High School – 6.0% (down from last month)
Some college – 5.1% (up from last month)
Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.8% (down from last month)

In July, 31 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 5.4%. 20 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, had unemployment rates that were above the national average. One state had an unemployment rate that was the same as the national average.

The state with the highest unemployment rate in July was Puerto Rico at 8.8%. [BLS 8/21]

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In 2020, 10.8% of all wage and salaried workers were members of unions, up 0.5% from 2019. That is the highest mark since 2015 (11.0%).

Men were more likely than women to be in a union (11% vs. 10.5%). The highest wage cohort was 45-64 years old.

Black workers (11.2%) were more likely to be union members than white (10.3%), Asian (8.8%) or Hispanic (8.5%).

It is also the case that the actual number of union members fell in 2020 by over 321,000, but the decline in nonunion jobs was much steeper. [Axios]

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76% of people in the US, China, the UK, Brazil, India, Germany, Japan, and other large economies, say they have higher expectations for a prospective employer now more than 3 years ago.

60% of employers surveyed, say their employees have more power and leverage now than they had before the pandemic. As a result, more companies are

taking positions on social issues including climate change and racial equity. [Axios AM 9/1/21]

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Since the pandemic began, many younger workers have considered changing their occupation or field of work.

18-39 years old	30%
40-49 years old	21%
50 and older	12%

And younger Americans generally have considered moving to a new community.

18-39 year olds	41%
40-64 year olds	24%
65 and older	11%

[WP 8/16/21]

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This and That

“It’s/That’s a great question.” How often do you hear that phrase from someone who is being interviewed on some TV/cable program and when you think about it you don’t think the question is so great?

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College campuses are more diverse than they were a few decades ago but there is still a wide racial enrollment gap.

In 2019, 89.9% of recent Asian high school graduates, 66.9% of recent white graduates, and 63.4% of Latino graduates were enrolled in college, compared with 50.7% of Black high school graduates. [Axios AM Deep Dive: 8/21/21]

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As of September 16, 2021, 37 Vice Presidents of the United States had cast a total of 276 tie breaking votes in the U.S. Senate. Vice President Harris has cast 8 tie breaking votes so far. This places her eleventh on the list of Vice Presidents who have cast the most tie breaking votes.

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The following represent the percentage of decisions in which each U.S. Supreme Court justice voted with the majority. [SCOTUSblog 8/21/21]

Kavanaugh	97%
Roberts	91%
Barrett	91%
Gorsuch	90%
Alito	83%
Thomas	81%
Breyer	76%
Kagan	75%
Sotomayor	69%

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Odds and Ends

A university lab in Piacenza, Italy, equipped with aspirators to remove extra odors from the air, is often used by professional tasters to evaluate the origins and quality of olive oils, coffee blends, grappa, and chocolates. [NYT 8/21/21]

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73% of college students say their school should implement a vaccine mandate for those on campus. 52% of these students say their schools are doing so.

And 86% of college students say they're fully vaccinated while 6% say they definitely won't get the shots. [Generation Lab/Axios poll]

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An 80-pound cougar has been removed from a New York City apartment where she was being kept illegally as a pet. The owner of the 11-month-old female cougar surrendered the animal on August 26th. [Wide World of News 8/31/21]

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The Obama administration prosecuted more government officials for leaking secrets to the press than all previous administrations combined, bringing Espionage Act charges against eight people in eight years and referring 316 cases for investigation. [NYT 9/5/21]

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In 2020, New York City police recovered about 150 ghost guns – weapons that can be built from kits available for purchase online from gun manufacturers – as compared to 48 guns the year before. [NYT 9/11/21]

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Quotes

“At a time when nativism could have stirred hatred and violence against people perceived as outsiders, I saw Americans reaffirm their welcome of immigrants and refugees. That is the nation I know.”

George W Bush,
at 9/11 anniversary ceremony in
Shanksville, PA

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“A judge’s loyalty is to the rule of law, not the political party that helped secure his or her appointment.”

Justice Stephen G. Breyer

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George Washington’s
Rules of Civility
&
Decent Behavior
in Company and Conversation

At the age of 14, George Washington wrote down 110 rules. These rules were drawn from an English translation of a French book of maxims.

Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.

In the presence of others sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

If you cough, sneeze, sigh, or yawn, do it not loud but privately; and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.

Sleep not when others speak, sit not when others stand, speak not when you should hold your peace, walk not on when others stop.

When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even, without putting one on the other or crossing them.

[Thanks to Joel Jankowsky for providing this list]

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Quotes by Mother Teresa

“Peace begins with a smile.”

“We fear the future because we are wasting today.”

“Profound joy of the heart is like a magnet that indicates the path of life.”

“Love begins by taking care of the closest one – the ones at home.”

“Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.”

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Some Questions

Why is it good if a vacuum really sucks?

If a word is misspelled in the dictionary, how would we ever know?

If Webster wrote the first dictionary, where did he find the words?

Why did we say something is out of whack? What is a whack?

Why do you press harder on the buttons of a remote control when you know the batteries are dead?

Why do they call it a TV set when you only have one?

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Presidents

Who are the best and worst presidents? The following survey is produced by C-SPAN. The best, Abraham Lincoln; the worst, James Buchanan; the best among the last 11 presidents – John Kennedy.

	2021 Final <u>Score</u>	In order of place			
		<u>2021</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2000</u>
<u>7 highest scoring presidents</u>					
Abraham Lincoln	897	1	1	1	1
George Washington	851	2	2	2	3
Franklin D. Roosevelt	841	3	3	3	2
Theodore Roosevelt	785	4	4	4	4
Dwight D. Eisenhower	734	5	5	8	9
Harry S. Truman	713	6	6	5	5
Thomas Jefferson	704	7	7	7	7
 <u>11 most recent presidents</u>					
Kennedy	699	8	8	6	8
Reagan	681	9	9	10	11
Obama	664	10	12	NA	NA
Johnson	654	11	10	11	10
Clinton	594	19	15	14	21
GHW Bush	585	21	20	18	20
Carter	506	26	27	25	22
Ford	498	28	25	22	23
GWBush	495	29	33	36	NA
Nixon	464	31	28	27	26
Trump	312	41	NA	NA	NA

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President Biden

(The following is based on registered voters unless indicated otherwise.)

President Biden's job approval ratings

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN</u>	<u>FOX</u>	<u>QUINNIPIAC</u>
SEPT'21	XXX	44/51A	52/48	XXX	XXX

AUG'21	49/48A	xxx	xxx	53/46	47/44
JULY'21	CNBC	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JULY'21	48/45A	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
JUNE'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	56/43	xxx
MAY'21	xxx	xxx	xxx	54/42	49/41
APR'21	51/43	52/42	52/45	54/43	48/42

(CNN pol reported in September taken 8/3-9/7)

<u>Date</u>	<u>AP-NORC</u>	<u>ECON/YOUGOV</u>	<u>POL/MORNCON</u>
SEPT'21	xxx	43/52	XXX
AUG'21	xxx	47/46	47/49
AUG'21	54/46	48/46	50/48
AUG'21	xxx	47/47	51/46
AUG'21	xxx	49/44	52/46
JULY'21	59/41	49/45	52/45
JULY'21	xxx	50/43	52/44
JUNE'21	55/44	52/44	53/44
	xxx	51/43	52/43
MAY'21	xxx	52/42	55/41
APR'21	63/36 A	xxx	xxx

As of September 9, the following is Biden's approval rating based on Real Clear Politics:

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>
Over all	45.3%	49.4%
On the economy	45.6%	46.6%
On foreign policy	42.6%	52.0%

Gallup now does monthly or semi-monthly surveys of all adults. WW will 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>
8/17/21	49%	48%	48.5%	45.9%
6/18/21	56%	42%	51.8%	42.4%
5/18/21	54%	40%	52.7%	40.7%
4/21/21	57%	40%	53.4%	40.1%

3/15/21	54%	42%	53.8%	40.2%
2/18/21	56%	40%	54.4%	37.8%

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After his first 100 days in office, 51% of Americans thought that Biden had accomplished a great deal/fair amount. After 230 days in office the number who said Biden had accomplished a great deal/fair amount had dropped to 40%. [NBC 8/17/21]

On September 1, 2021, Biden’s overall approval rating in the NPR-PBS-Newshour– Marist poll was 43%. Four months earlier, in April 2021, Biden’s approval rating in the same poll was 54%. [NPR/Marist 8/31/21]

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Biden’s rating on handling the economy on September 1 was 45% approval and 49% disapproval. [ABC/WP 9/1/21]

On handling foreign policy his approval rating was 38% and disapproval rating was 56%. [NPR/Marist 9/1/21]

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The public believes that the decision to withdraw troops from Afghanistan was the right decision – so say 54% of the public.

69% say the U.S. mostly failed to achieve its goal in that country.

42% say the Biden administration did a poor job of handling the situation.

61% of Republicans view Taliban control of Afghanistan as a major security threat to the United States, a view held by only 33% of Democrats.

[PEW 8/29/21]

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The latest NBC News poll shows an enormous divide in opinion based on how Americans get their news.

Those who get their news from **conservative media** like Fox, OAN, Newsmax.

Those who get their news from **liberal media** like CNN, MSNBC.

Those who get news from **newspapers/broadcast TV** not cable or social media.

Those who get news from **social media**.

Biden job approval

All adults: 49%
Conservative media: 24%
Liberal media: 69%
Newspapers/broadcast: 60%
Social media: 50%

Approval Biden’s Covid Handling

All adults: 53%
30%
73%
63%
60%

Approval of Biden’s handling of economy

All adults: 47%
Conservative media: 24%
Liberal media: 65%
Newspaper/broadcast: 52%
Social media: 46%

Approval of Biden’s handling of Afghanistan

All adults: 25%
12%
37%
29%
20%

Congressional preference

All adults: D+1
Conservative media: R+56
Liberal media: D+45
Newspapers/broadcast: D+19
Social media: D+2

Already received Covid Vaccine

All adults: 69%
60%
79%
78%
65%

[NBC 8/17/21]

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The Biden administration will wipe out \$5.8 billion in student loans held by 323,000 people who are permanently disabled. Currently there is \$1.6 trillion held in student loan debt, much of which could be eliminated through executive action. [Numlock News 8/20/21]

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In early August the White House tweeted that it was the “first administration in history to add jobs every month of the first six months in office.”

In fact, based on BLS data, since 1953, six administrations have added jobs every month in their first six months in office: Nixon, Carter, Reagan, Bush 41, Trump, and Biden. [Winston Group 8/13/21]

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

President Biden has been able to affect the federal judiciary early.

As of August 31, 2021, 9 judges nominated by Biden have been confirmed, 4 to the Courts of Appeals, and 5 to the District Courts.

There are currently an additional 76 vacancies in Article III courts; 6 in the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 71 in the U.S. District Courts, and 2 in the in the U.S. Courts of International Trade.

President Biden has nominated an additional 24 individuals, 21 to the district and 9 to the circuit courts.

The chart below reflects the number of Article III court judges appointed by every U.S. president since Jimmy Carter.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Supreme Ct</u>	<u>Appeals Ct</u>	<u>District Ct</u>	<u>Int'l Trade</u>
Biden – 7 months	9	0	4	5	
Trump – 4 years	234	3	54	174	3
Obama – 8 years	325	2	55	268	
GW Bush – 8 years	325	2	62	261	
Clinton – 8 years	373	2	66	305	
GHW Bush – 4 years	192	2	42	148	
Reagan – 8 years	376	4	83	290	
Carter – 4 years	261	0	59	203	

[USCourts/Wikipedia/List of federal judges appointed by Joe Biden]

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Election officials are coming under unprecedented attack for doing their jobs. Some officials have been the target of threats to themselves and their families.

Stepping up to help these election officials are two well-known lawyers. Bob Bauer served as White House counsel during the Obama administration and teaches at the New York University School of Law. He was in private practice for many years representing democratic. candidates and organizations. Benjamin L. Ginsberg has practiced election law for 38 years on the Republican side of the aisle and is a distinguished visiting fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

The two have joined together to work on the problem noted above. Here is part of what they had to say in a recent Op Ed.

“The two of us have been partisan opponents in the past, representing opposing political parties to the best of our abilities. But at this moment in time, we share a grave concern about attacks on those public servants who successfully oversaw what was arguably the most secure and transparent election in our country’s history, with record turnout, during a global pandemic. If such attacks go unaddressed, our system of self-governance will suffer long-term damage.

“So, in partnership with the nonprofit and nonpartisan Center for Election Innovation & Research, we are launching the Election Official Legal Defense Network (EOLDN), which will connect licensed, qualified pro bono attorneys with election administrators who need advice or assistance. State and local election workers anywhere in the country can go to ELODN.org, or call the toll-free number (877) 313-5210, at any time, 24/7, to request, to be connected with a lawyer who can help them, at no cost.”

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2022 Election

Demographic shares of the electorate

	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020
Whites	77%	79%	75%	79%	74%	75%	72%
Non-whites	23	21	25	21	26	25	28

[David Wasserman Cook Political Report 9/8/21]

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Voters were asked whether the Democratic and Republican Parties are headed in the right direction or on the wrong track.

Democratic Party

		<u>2017</u>	<u>2021</u>
All Voters	Right Direction	32%	45%
	Wrong Track	49%	47%
Democrats	Right Direction	61%	82%

	Wrong Track	24%	11%
Independents	Right Direction	19%	31%
	Wrong Track	52%	55%
Republicans	Right Direction	15%	11%
	Wrong Track	72%	84%

Republican Party

		<u>2017</u>	<u>2021</u>
All Voters	Right Direction	34%	36%
	Wrong Track	53%	53%
Democrats	Right Direction	13%	17%
	Wrong Track	79%	74%
Independents	Right Direction	22%	27%
	Wrong Track	56%	55%
Republicans	Right Direction	66%	64%
	Wrong Track	24%	27%

[Morning Consult 7/26/21]

In 7 out of the last 8 elections, the public voted for change. Since 2006, the party in power has suffered significant midterm election losses. With only two exceptions – 1998 and 2002 – the party out of power has picked up seats in every midterm election since World War II. [Doug Sosnik – Axios 8/9/21]

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Presidential approval is the best predictor of whether the incumbent party gains or loses seats.

<u>Job approval</u>	<u>Average change</u>
over 60%	+1 seat
49-59%	- 12 seats
Under 49%	- 39 seats

[Public Opinion Strategies]

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for August 31, 2021.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Joe Biden	46.4	49.2
Donald Trump	41.3	52.0
Kamala Harris	41.2	49.6
Nancy Pelosi	34.0	55.0
Chuck Schumer	32.5	43.0
Kevin McCarthy	21.7	36.0
Mitch McConnell	20.5	60.0

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The 117th Congress
Congress

Approval of the Congress was growing after the election. Since mid-May it has dropped but seems to be starting upward again and then it dropped again.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 9/1/21	28.5%	60.3%
Real Clear Pol. 8/3/21	31.4%	59.6%
Real Clear Pol. 6/15/21	28.8%	60.5%
Real Clear Pol. 5/18/21	35%	56.3%
Real Clear Pol. 5/4/21	36.3%	55.5%
Real Clear Pol. 4/6/21	34.3%	57.0%
Real Clear Pol. 3/2/21	29.7%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 2/22/21	26.3%	60.0%
Real Clear Pol. 1/5/21	18.7%	70.3%

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

In the House, 419 out of 435 members (96%) are of the same party as the Presidential candidate who carried their district in 2020. [Axios/Doug Sosnik 8/8/21]

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Based on the 2010 and 2020 censuses, of the 25 fastest growing districts, 18 of those districts are currently held by Republicans. Of the 25 slowest growing

districts, all of which are losing population, 16 of those districts are currently held by Republicans.

Non-Hispanic whites fell from 64% to just 57.8% of the population.

Hispanic residents were 18.7% of the population compared to 16.3% in the 2010 Census. [David Wasserman/Cook Political Report 8/13/21]

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After the decennial census, reapportionment is in order to make congressional districts the same size. Some states lose seats other states gain them. In this instance 6 states will gain seats and 7 states will lose seats.

The following states will gain districts:

- Texas +2 (36 seats to 38 seats)
- Florida +1 (27 seats to 28 seats)
- Montana +1(1 seat to 2 seats)
- Colorado +1 (5 seats to 6 seats)
- North Carolina +1 (13 seats to 14 seats)
- Oregon +1(5 seats to 6 seats)

The following states will lose seats:

- California -1 (53 seats to 52 seats)
- Illinois – 1 (18 seats to 17 seats)
- Michigan - 1 (14 seats to 13 seats)
- Ohio – 1 (16 seats to 15 seats)
- Pennsylvania – 1 (8 seats to 17 seats)
- New York – 1 (27 seats to 26 seats)
- West Virginia – 1 (3 seats to 2 seats)

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Here is who has control over how the House districts are drawn:

- 187 districts – Republican politicians
- 75 districts – Democrat politicians
- 71 districts – Both Republican and Democrat politicians
- 96 districts – Independent Commissions
- 6 districts – six states have only one district

Republicans only need to redraw themselves into five Democratic congressional districts to take back the majority.

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Washington Watch uses the Cook Political Report for its report on elections in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Currently:

Democrats - 220 seats

Republicans - 212 seats

Vacancies - 3 seats

OH – 11, special election 11/2/21 – Dem seat

OH - 15, special election 11/2/21 – Rep seat

FL – 20, special election 1/11/22 – Dem Seat

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Since World War II, the president’s party has lost an average of 26 seats in the mid-terms.

“To hold the House in 2022, Democrats would likely need a combination of factors to break their way: aggressive gerrymanders in New York and Illinois, favorable commission outcomes or court rulings striking GOP gerrymanders, a rebound in Biden’s approval and weak turnout among casual Trump voters. It’s not an impossible scenario, but the GOP’s path to 218 seats is much easier to envision today.” [Cook Political/David Wasserman 9/8/21]

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THE SENATE

94 out of 100 Senators are of the same party as the Presidential candidate who carried their state in 2020. [Axios/Doug Sosnik 8/8/21]

[WW uses Jessica Taylor of the Cook Political Report and Inside Elections for the Senate chart below. When those two organizations do not agree, WW uses Sabato as a tie breaker.]

Republicans – 50

Democrats – 48

Independents – 2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Seats not up in 2022	34	30	2
Safe in 2022	10	16	
	Padilla	Murkowski	
	Bennet	AL – open	
	Blumenthal	Boozman	
	Schatz	Grassley	
	Duckworth	Crapo	
	Van Hollen	Young	
	Schumer	Moran	
	Wyden	Paul	
	Leahy	Kennedy	
	Murray	MO – open	
		OH – Open	
		Hoeven	
		Lankford	
		Scott	
		Thune	
		Lee	
Likely	0	1	
		Rubio	
Lean	4	2	
	Kelly	Johnson	
	Warnock	NC – open	
	Hassan		
	Cortez Masto		
Toss Up	0	1	
		PA – open	

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2024 Election

The following people have indicated or been named as someone thinking about or planning to run for president in 2024.

Donald Trump
 Kristi Noem – Governor of South Dakota

Nikki Haley – Former governor of South Carolina (Announced she will not run if Trump runs)
Mike Pompeo – Former Secretary of State
Larry Hogan – Governor of Maryland
Ben Sasse – U.S. Senator
Ron DeSantis – Governor of Florida
Tom Cotton – U.S. Senator
Josh Hawley – U.S. Senator
Rick Scott – U.S. Senator
Ted Cruz – U.S. Senator
Mike Pence – Former Vice President
Chris Christie – Former Governor New Jersey

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Women Will Get It Done

Poppy Harlow, co-anchor of CNN Newsroom, a broadcaster since 2008, will be on leave from August 20th until May 2022 while she will be in a one-year Master of Studies in Law program at Yale University.

The program is designed in part for “mid-career journalists seeking an intensive immersion in legal thinking.”

During this period, she will be a fill-in anchor when she is available. (She filled in on Labor Day.)

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The AFL-CIO has elected Liz Schuler as president following the recent death of its long-time leader, Richard Trumka. Schuler will be the first woman to hold the position of president in the AFL-CIO’s nearly 70 years of existence.

Previously, Schuler held the position of Secretary-Treasurer, which is treated as the “second in command” position. [Politico-Washington Post]

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Remember Amanda Gorman, the 23-year-old poet, who captivated the crowd at Joe Biden’s inaugural? She was the first National Youth Poet Laureate. Ms. Gorman will become the first Estee Lauder “Global Change-maker.” She was also the co-host of the Met Gala on September 13. [NYT 9/5/21]

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Kathy Hochul, formerly the lieutenant governor, was sworn in on August 24th at 12:04 a.m. ET as the first female governor of the state of New York, replacing Andrew Cuomo who resigned. [WSJ 8/24/21]

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Originally, the Tokyo Olympics was not going to permit athletes who are nursing mothers to bring their infants with them to the Summer Games. But fortunately, prior to the games, the Organizing Committee issued the following statement, “After careful consideration of the unique situation facing athletes with nursing children, we are pleased to confirm that, when necessary, nursing children will be able to accompany athletes to Japan.”

When the original rule was still in place, a company called Milk Stork offered to deliver breastmilk from Japan to other places in the world. This company had been launched in 2015 after the organizer, Kate Torgersen, faced logistical challenges bringing breast milk for her twins from a work trip.

When the IOC reversed their ban on athletes bringing their babies to Japan, Milk Stork switched gears focusing on Tokyo-bound support staff who were not covered by the new policy.

“Through emails, text messages and direct messages on social media, Milk Stork ended up being a key service for those supporting staff including physical therapists, nutritionists, and trainers.”

The company estimates that it helped ship more than 21 gallons of breast milk during the games. Parents were given special coolers and other storage materials. FedEx was then engaged to deliver the packages within 96 hours.

The company estimates that it shipped an additional 10 gallons of milk during the Paralympics.

To date, since its inception Milk Stork estimates it has shipped 4 million ounces of breast milk to date. [19th News 8/24/2021]

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WW Recommends Books & Other Things

In this feature of the Washington Watch, WW will primarily recommend books you may find interesting but may also now and then mention a TV program or other things. I welcome your suggestions and your input. What have you been reading or watching that you think WW readers might like?

Peril

by

Bob Woodward and Robert Costa

The transition from President Donald J. Trump to President Joseph R. Biden Jr. stands as one of the most dangerous periods in American history.

But as #1 internationally bestselling author Bob Woodward and acclaimed reporter Robert Costa reveal for the first time, it was far more than just a domestic political crisis.

Woodward and Costa interviewed more than 200 people at the center of the turmoil, resulting in more than 6,000 pages of transcripts—and a spellbinding and definitive portrait of a nation on the brink.

This classic study of Washington takes readers deep inside the Trump White House, the Biden White House, the 2020 presidential campaign, and the Pentagon and Congress, with vivid, eyewitness accounts of what really happened.

Peril is supplemented throughout with never-before-seen material from secret orders, transcripts of confidential phone calls, diaries, emails, meeting notes and other personal and government records, making for an unparalleled history.

It is also the first inside look at Biden's presidency as he faces the challenges of a lifetime: the continuing deadly pandemic and millions of Americans facing soul-crushing economic pain, all the while navigating a bitter and disabling partisan divide, a world rife with threats, and the hovering, dark shadow of the former president.

“We have much to do in this winter of peril,” Biden declared at his inauguration, an event marked by a nerve-wracking security alert and the threat of domestic terrorism.

Peril is the extraordinary story of the end of one presidency and the beginning of another and represents the culmination of Bob Woodward's news-making trilogy on the Trump presidency, along with *Fear* and *Rage*. And it is the beginning of a collaboration with fellow *Washington Post* reporter Robert Costa that will remind readers of Woodward's coverage, with Carl Bernstein, of President Richard M. Nixon's final days.

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Note: The following is about a book that is not scheduled to be published until April 2022.

Simon & Shuster has announced that it will publish *THE ROAD TAKEN*, a memoir by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt). Leahy was elected to the United States Senate in 1974 and is currently its most senior member. Leahy was born in Montpelier, Vermont. He is currently the President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate and Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He served for 20 years as chair or ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He is also the most senior Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee where he previously served as Chair.

As the senior-most member de facto dean of the chamber, Senator Leahy established himself as a moral leader and a liberal pioneer over four daces spanning nine presidential administrations.

Further note, I first met Patrick Leahy in 1974 when he was serving his 8th year as State Attorney of Chitten County, Vermont. Leahy had decided to run for the U.S. Senate and I was traveling the country as a volunteer for the Senate Campaign Committee along with its Chairman Nordy Hoffman.

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The Code Breaker
by Walter Isaacson

When Jennifer Doudna was in sixth grade, she came home one day to find that her dad had left a paperback titled *The Double Helix* on her bed. She put it aside, thinking it was one of those detective tales she loved. When she read it on a rainy Saturday, she discovered she was right, in a way. As she sped through the pages, she became enthralled by the intense drama behind the competition to discover the code of life. Even though her high school counselor told her girls

didn't become scientists, she decided she would.

Driven by a passion to understand how nature works and to turn discoveries into inventions, she would help to make what the book's author, James Watson, told her was the most important biological advance since his co-discovery of the structure of DNA. She and her collaborators turned a curiosity of nature into an invention that will transform the human race: an easy-to-use tool that can edit DNA. Known as CRISPR, it opened a brave new world of medical miracles and moral questions.

The development of CRISPR and the race to create vaccines for coronavirus will hasten our transition to the next great innovation revolution. The past half-century has been a digital age, based on the microchip, computer, and internet. Now we are entering a life-science revolution. Children who study digital coding will be joined by those who study genetic code.

Should we use our new evolution-hacking powers to make us less susceptible to viruses? What a wonderful boon that would be! And what about preventing depression? Hmm...Should we allow parents, if they can afford it, to enhance the height or muscles or IQ of their kids?

After helping to discover CRISPR, Doudna became a leader in wrestling with these moral issues and, with her collaborator Emmanuelle Charpentier, won the Nobel Prize in 2020. Her story is a thrilling detective tale that involves the most profound wonders of nature, from the origins of life to the future of our species."

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Primal Fear

Tribalism, Empathy and the Way Forward

by Robert M Smith

The assault on the United States capitol on January 6, 2021, was entirely predictable--the anger, the conspiracy theories, the tribalism, even the violence. It was the culmination of decades of traumatic social and economic change that has awakened evolutionary fear and ancient bias. Fear of "others," of being left behind, and of the loss of sacred traditions and norms. Primal Fear describes the evolutionary roots and contemporaneous drivers of this fear and how the determined actions of our political leaders, and the daily commitment of each of us, can diminish America's divisiveness and create a sense of common purpose.

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Restaurants

The two restaurant reviews that follow represent the 399th (Tony and Joe's) and 400th (Irish Inn) restaurant reviews that have been included in the Washington Watch.

As noted in the August 2021 issue of the Watch, this makes 400 reviews from 57 cities, 21 states, and the District of Columbia, National Airport, Amtrak, and 6 countries Netherlands, Italy, France, Germany, United States, and England (including the British West Indies).

To remind you, these restaurant reviews are not designed to write critically about restaurants or foods and often include commentary about restrooms. If WW (me) does not like a restaurant, WW does not write about it.

* * * * *

Tony and Joe's Seafood Place
Washington Harbor
3000 K Street NW
Washington, DC 20007
202-944-4545

Debbie and I went with Francine and Mel to Tony and Joe's at their suggestion. They had been at the restaurant many times before and their suggestions of good restaurants in the past have been excellent. This was yet another time that their suggestion was right on.

The restaurant is huge by any standard. There is a large bar outside which is very popular as is the bar inside when it is in use. Depending on the configurations, both inside and outside the restaurant can seat at the same time 400-500 people. There was no one seated inside the night we were there.

We started dinner by sharing a single starter, the Ivy City Smokehouse Smoked Fish Board – locally smoke salmon, whitefish salad, capers, red onion, cucumber, plum tomato, horseradish cream toasted naan.

Francine and Mel both ordered Teriyaki Salmon – Canada, broccoli, baby carrots, fingerling potatoes, ginger teriyaki glaze. Francine enjoyed the sauce; Mel did not seem to find it a favorite.

Debbie chose Whole Steamed New England Lobster – snow peas, roasted fingerling potatoes, drawn butter.

I started with Crispy Fried Brussels Sprouts -rosemary, parmesan, chipotle aioli. It was a very large serving and did not begin to eat it all. The only other person to try the sprouts was Francine who ate 5 sprouts.

I selected the Whole Fried Branzino – sauteed eggplant, basil, red pepper, jasmine rice cilantro. Delivered to the table the fish looked different than anything I had ever seen. There was far more fish than anything I could finish but it was excellent.

For dessert Francine and Mel shared a Vanilla Bean ice cream sundae with chocolate sauce. Debbie and I shared a chocolate brownie topped with vanilla ice cream, chocolate sauce and whipped cream.

On the Potomac River side of the outdoor portion of the restaurant there is a large, thick wall which appears to be about 15 to 20 feet high. It turns out that the wall can be lowered using special equipment allowing for a full view of the Potomac and the Kennedy Center, etc.

The restrooms are inside the building and a long distance from where we were seated. Since WW did not need to use the facilities there is no report on those facilities.

There is a very large parking garage in the basement of Washington Harbor.

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The Irish Inn at Glen Echo*
6119 Tulane Avenue
Glen Echo, Maryland 20812
301-229-6600
Open Tuesday- Friday 12 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Debbie and I went to the Irish Inn for dinner with Rita, Bob, and Andy.

There are two possible entryways into the Inn. The first entry coming from the District takes you to a very small parking area. The second entryway accesses the Inn and Glen Echo amusement park (Tulane Drive) and there is substantial parking near the Inn and the park.

At the entry to the Irish Inn building in what was part of the parking lot, there is a very large area outside the building to the left that is lined with tables seating up to 4 people. These tables had large umbrellas above them and there were a number of picnic tables with attached benches that seat up to six people with large coverings above them.

Our group was seated at one of the picnic tables. Debbie commandeered two individual chairs that weren't being used at other tables and placed one at each end. One for me and one for her.

Warren was our server. He was friendly, attentive, and helpful. He has worked at the Inn for five years. Sometimes full time and sometimes part time. When he is not working at the Inn, he is a Maintenance Technician. (see ** below for a description of a maintenance technician.)

An initial water course was served in Styrofoam cups.

Andy and I started with Buttermilk Fried Calamari as I always order calamari whenever on a menu.

Rita selected as a starter the Irish Greens Salad – Baby Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Carrots, Watermelon, Radish, Country Vinaigrette.

Bob and Debbie picked the Winter Pear & Pomegranate Salad – Arcadian Harvest mix, Pears, Walnuts, Pomegranate Seeds, Goat Cheese, Champagne Vinaigrette.

Bob, Andy, and Debbie ordered Lobster rolls served with French fries and each of them commented about the quality and quantity of the lobster meat.

For her main course, Rita selected Crab Cake Entrée – Two Jumbo Lump Crab Cakes, Vegetable of the Day and asked to substitute French fries for the mashed potatoes that usually come with this dish.

I opted for Seafood Skewer – Scallops, Shrimp, Salmon, Bell Peppers, Mushrooms, Saffron Rice, Vegetable of the Day.

We all passed on dessert.

It can be very noisy as it seems to be directly on the path of planes heading to National Airport. Sitting outside, one can easily here the dance music emanating from Glen Echo.

Again, the restrooms were inside the main building and too far away to check them out.

*The Irish Inn as we know it today was built on the site of a house owned by the Moxley family. The family opened a tavern there at the end of prohibition in 1931. In the 1940s and until 1964 it was Otto's grill. During the 60s and 70s it was a roadhouse known for chilies and bar fights. From 1986 until 2002 it was an upscale restaurant known as the Inn at Glen Echo. The current owners reopened it in 2003 as the Irish Inn at Glen Echo.

The current owners are Christy and Libby Hughes. Christy emigrated to the United States from Ireland. Prior to arriving in the United States in 1974 Christy learned about the restaurant business. He worked as the manager of the Dubliner Irish Pub (WW was there more than once). He met Libby there and they have owned a series of restaurants leading up to the Irish Inn.

** Maintenance Technicians are hired by facility owners to oversee the general upkeep of the building and its infrastructure. Their role is to maintain building operations and ensure that the facilities are safe, and functional, at all times. They manage routine maintenance and emergency repairs to prevent and resolve safety or comfort issues. Maintenance technicians install new equipment and oversee building upgrades according to owner requests and to preserve the facility

Mike

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