

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 199

April 9, 2022

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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

28% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction.
59% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right track</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Male	32%	57%
Female	25%	62%
Democrats	47%	35%
Republicans	8%	87%
Independents	29%	62%
Urban	37%	50%
Suburban	28%	60%
Rural	21%	68%

[Econ/YouGov 3/22/22]

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In 2021, the Capital Area Food Bank provided 60 million healthy meals, distributed 30.5 million meals of produce and 6.9 million meals of protein. [Winter 2022]

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6,516 pedestrians were killed in the U.S. in 2020, the latest full-year official numbers available. That is the highest number since 1989. [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.]

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In the last two years there has been a dramatic drop in Americans’ satisfaction with the State of the Nation in a variety of areas. The following are a selection of the issues.

The only issue on which there has positive growth between 2020 and 2022 is “the acceptance of gays and lesbians in the nation”.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Aspects of U.S. life:			
The overall quality of life	84%	67%	69%

Size and power of the federal government	39	31	32
How well the system of government works	43	27	30
The way income and wealth are distributed	43	36	30
The moral and ethical climate	32	18	20

Policy areas:

Acceptance of gays and lesbians in the nation	56	55	62
The position of women in the nation	63	62	60
The quality of medical care in the nation	52	53	46
Position of Black and other racial minorities	46	35	40
The social security and Medicare systems	43	44	38
Availability of affordable healthcare	37	34	35
State of the nation's economy	68	43	33
The state of race relations	36	23	28
The nation's energy policies	44	42	27
Nation's policies regarding abortion issue	32	33	24
Nation's policies to reduce or control crime	47	27	24

(To see the entire list, go to Gallup.com and search “Americans Offer Gloomy State of the Nation Report”, dated 2/2/22.)

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12 countries have full equal/legal rights for women – the United States is not one of them. The countries that have full equal rights are Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden.

Ranking 13th and 14th with a score of 97.5 are Germany and the United Kingdom. The United States ranks #15 with a score of 91.3.

Following the United States, in order, are Saudi Arabia 80; Japan 78.8; China 75.6; India 74.4; Nigeria 63.1; Qatar 29.4. [Statisa 8/8/22] [Thanks to Jason Berman.]

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The Consumer Price Index rose 0.8% in February and was up 7.9% over a year earlier, the steepest 12 month rise since 1982. [Mike Allen 3/10/22]

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There are 6,166 state legislative seats up for election in 2022. [Ballotpedia 2/25/22]

Only 70 of the 3,843 people who have ever served as federal judges in the United States – 01.82% -- have been Black women. [2/2/22]

The average American read 20 minutes a day in 2020, up 21% from 2019. [Axios Finish Line 3/22/22]

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21% of adults say that “cost of living” is the most important issue facing the country. 16% say it is jobs and the economy, 14% say it is war between Russia and Ukraine. Other issues earning double digits include voting rights and climate change. [NBC 3/22/22]

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In March 2020, roughly 90% of Americans trusted the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Within weeks that trust was plunging among those who mostly watch Fox News.

By the end of last month, (February 2022) only 16% of those who said they get most of their news from Fox or other conservative outlets still said they trusted the CDC.

77% of those who favor network news and major national newspapers still say they trust the CDC while 87% of those who primarily watch CNN or MSNBC continue their trust of the CDC. [Axios AM 3/11/22]

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Since its founding in 2011, the National Diaper Bank Networks member banks have distributed more than 550 million diapers.

The Greater DC Diaper Bank (DC, Maryland, and Virginia) has distributed 25 million diapers of which about 16 million of those diapers have been distributed since March 2020.

The diaper banks across the country have also distributed tens of millions of material basic necessities, including baby wipes, children’s books, breast pumps, bottles, and period products.

For the first time the federal budget includes \$10 million for diapers. There is still a long way to go but it is a step in the right direction. [National and DC diaper bank offices]

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The Initial Public Offering business has frozen over. So far this year just 22 companies have gone public in traditional initial public offerings, raising \$2.3 billion through March 22, 2022. That is down from the same time last year when 79 companies had raised nearly \$36 billion by this point. [WSJ 3/26/22]

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5.4 million people applied for small-business licenses last year, a 53% jump from 2019, pre-pandemic. Global investment in startups shattered records in 2021, hitting \$643 billion – 10x what it was 10 years ago. [Axios Finish Line 3/15/22]

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23 three states do not require concealed carry gun permits. In the 2020 presidential election, 7 of those states (51 electoral votes) voted for Biden while 16 of those states (131 electoral votes) voted for Trump. [National Archives]

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The following are excerpts from an article by Alexandra Moe that was published in Washington City Paper the week of March 21st. [Alexandra’s website is www.alexmoewrites.com.]

The New Fire at Engine 22

They became firefighters to fight fires. Now they’re senior aides.

“In 2017, only 4 percent of calls that firefighters responded to involved actual fires, according to the National Fire Protection Association. The vast majority of calls – 80 percent in Washington, DC in 2020, for example – are for medical emergencies. Many times, an old person has fallen and can’t get up (a ‘lift assist’, in firefighter – speak.) In 2020 the DC Fire and EMS Department performed nearly 4,000 lift assists, an average of 10 per day. In plain English, firefighters spend a surprising amount of time picking our parents and grandparents up off the ground.”

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“Since 1987, all DC firefighters have been required to train as EMTs. Twelve percent of uniformed members are trained paramedics.”

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“Firefighters entered a job intending to douse flames yet learn that one of the most important skills is how to talk to elderly person alone on a bathroom floor.”

- - -

“John Donnelly, Chief of the DC FEMS, noted, ‘They’re not calling us because they have other options. We’re the front line of health care for a lot of people.’”

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Who believes this statement? Given the difficult energy situation we find ourselves in, we have to do everything: maximize drilling, maximize developing alternative energies, maximize nuclear power, and maximize conservation.

	<u>Believe</u>	<u>Do not believe</u>
Overall	67%	17%
GOP	74	14
Independent	64	18
Democratic	64	19

[Winning the Issues 3/14/22]

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Rural Voters’ Views of the Democratic and Republican Parties

	<u>The Democratic Party</u>		<u>The Republican Party</u>	
	<u>Favorably</u>	<u>Unfavorably</u>	<u>Favorably</u>	<u>Unfavorably</u>
All rural voters	29%	65%	52%	41%
Age:				
Less than 45	31%	56%	46%	41%
45 & older	27%	70%	56%	41%
Education:				
Less than College	28%	65%	54%	37%
Some College or More	32%	65%	47%	50%
Party ID:				
Democratic	77%	19%	---	79%
Independent	23%	61%	32%	54%
Republican	---	94%	88%	11%

[Morning Consult 1/16/22]

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IN MEMORIUM

Kenneth M. Duberstein
Born 1944 - Died 2022

President Ronald Reagan's White House Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff; Assistant and Deputy Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs; Deputy Under Secretary of Labor under President Ford; Director of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. General Services administration; Aide to Senator Jacob Javits

For a detailed biography of Ken Duberstein, see The Washington Post and the New York Times of March 5, 2022, and Wikipedia.

In August 1989, a close friend of Ken and me, Howard Paster, called me to say that Ken Duberstein was starting a government affairs firm and was looking for a Democrat to join him. I knew who Ken was but did not really know him. Ken and I met a day or so later and a few days after that I resigned from the law firm in which I was a partner, and the Duberstein Group was born.

I retired from the Duberstein Group in 2015.

Ken and I had a "rule." If either of us said something to the other "in confidence" it would not be shared with anyone else. As far as I know neither of us ever broke the rule.

At some point, I learned that Ken's and my first jobs were quite similar.

After getting his master's degree in 1966, Ken's first job was in Senator Javits' office as his driver.

After graduating from law school in 1964, my first job was as a Special Assistant Attorney General. My first responsibility as a new lawyer was to serve as Attorney General Walter Mondale's driver.

You can learn a lot when you are someone's driver, even before the age of cell phones.

Once the firm was organized, Ken and I agreed that each of us would also work on projects outside of the firm.

Ken decided to spend more time expanding his role in the business community. He served on the Boards of Directors of many companies including The Boeing Company, Conoco Phillips, the Fleming Companies, the St. Paul companies, Inc, and Fannie Mae. He also served on the Board of Governors for the American Stock Exchange and NASD.

In addition to his commercial boards, Ken was appointed as a Trustee of the Kennedy Center and there were a variety of other non-profit activities in which he engaged. For example, he chaired a senior advisory committee for the Institute of Politics at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

To be fair, the time he spent in the broader business community did more to help the firm grow than my work in the non-profit world.

We shared the happinesses and sadnesses of our lives.

I could not have had a better partner or friend. He is missed.

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Madeleine K. Albright
Born 1937 - Died 2022

Secretary of State, United States Ambassador to the United Nations, National Security Council, Aide to Senator Ed Muskie

For a detailed biography of Madeleine Albright, go to Britannica.com.

Several months before her death, former secretary of state Madeleine K. Albright wrote some reflections on the importance of making the most of life. Her thoughts are excerpted here from the new forward of the paperback edition of her most recent book "Hell and other Destinations: A 21st Century Memoir".

My home city, Washington, is not yet a state and is therefore without U.S. senators it can call its own. We do, however, have some very old cemeteries. Racked by weather and time, their headstones typically resemble the teeth of an out-punched boxer: some still upright, some crooked or broken, some clumped together, and others separated by irregular gaps. Study closely

enough the barely legible birth and death dates inscribed on their well-worn surfaces, and it becomes hard to hold back tears. A large portion of the interred are children.

As this evidence attests, through much of the past, life has been a gamble that many lost without ever being given a fair chance to succeed. For centuries, families routinely bore half a dozen offspring or more and, shortly after, on average, buried several of them. In some countries, this is still the case. Billions who began life never reached the age at which it was possible to appreciate any but the most basic appetites of existence, let alone explore the liberties, big and small, that many of us now take for granted. Add in the multitudes of young men and women whose tenure on Earth ended abruptly due to war, genocide, mishap, or plague, and it is shaming to see how frivolously we who still draw breath use many of the hours God gives us.

This is something I have thought about more and more in recent years, and it is why I have always preferred doers to idlers, whiners, and excuse-makers. As I have written, introspection is hardly my strong point, but as the author now of three memoirs, I have had numerous chances to reflect on what I have seen, felt, thought, and done.

Assessing myself, I have tried to be honest without overdoing it. People intent on finding fault with me can do their own research. I have, however, admitted to an array of shortcomings including pride, ambition, fits of hot temper, occasional bouts of insecurity, and an affinity for sweets.

In foreign policy, my area of expertise, I have been compelled at regular intervals to modify my views in light of new information without abandoning certain basic principles. “Genius” is often defined as the ability to be right the first time; unable to meet that standard consistently, I still strive to be right eventually. My parents taught me what the best teachers tell us all: that it is no sin to make a mistake, but unpardonable not to try to make the most of our talents. To me, resilience of spirit (far more than brilliance of intellect) is the essential ingredient of a full life.

No matter how smart we are, we can allow sorrows and grievances to overwhelm us, or we can respond positively to setbacks — be they caused by our own misjudgments or by forces beyond our control. This choice has rarely been starker than in the past two years. As individuals, we have had to adapt to the shock of unwelcome and unexpected circumstances.

Collectively, we have had to bounce back not only from the pandemic but also from doubts about our willingness to pursue social justice, our power to make self-government succeed and our capacity to prevent advanced technology from causing more harm than good. Worldwide, we have undergone a period of trial that has changed us in ways not yet fully revealed.

Clearly, our future leaders will have to be gutsy and resourceful, and so, each in our own way, will we. To those who despair of that possibility, I have a measure of sympathy but little patience. There is no shortage of worthwhile work to be done and, as those broken headstones remind us, no surplus of seasons in which to achieve our goals.

So let us buckle our boots, grab a cane if we need one, and march.

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for 2022 is 3.6%. That unemployment rate is lower than the 3.8% in February and substantially less than the 6.0% unemployment rate of March 2021.

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 March was 6.9% down from 7.2% in February and less than 10.7% a year earlier.

The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in March is 62.4%, up from 62.3 in February 2022.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for March 2022

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –2.8% (lower than last month)

Men –3.1% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Race

White – 3.2% (up from last month)

Black –6.2% (down from last month)
Hispanic – 4.2% (down from last month)
Asian –2.8% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school –5.2% (up from last month)
High School –4.0% (down from last month)
Some college –3.0% (down from last month)
Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.0% (down from last month)

In February 2022, 25 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 3.8%. 27 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, had unemployment rates that were above the national average.

The state/territory with the highest unemployment rate in February was Puerto Rico at 6.8%.

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There are roughly 1.8 job openings for every unemployed worker in the United States. [NYT 4/2/22]

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On Equal Pay Day, March 15th, there was evidence of the size of the gender pay gap.

- From the start of the pandemic through December 2021, women accounted for nearly 60% of our country’s 3.6 million net job losses.
- Approximately 1.1 million women left the workforce entirely.
- 1.8 million more women were underemployed – i.e., working fewer hours than they’d like.
- As of December, more than a third of unemployed women had been out of work for at least six months.

[Nancy LeaMond – nleamond@ aarp.org, 3/15/22]

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Currently, 50% of us believe we need to focus here at home because America cannot be the world’s policeman.

41% believe that America has not been strong enough and has allowed Russia and China to extend their influence and power throughout the world.

In 2015, 52% thought we needed to focus here at home because America cannot be the world's policeman.

40% believed America had not been strong enough. [NBC 3/22/22]

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79% of us agree with the decision by the United States to ban Russian oil, even if it causes higher gas prices. 17% disagree. [NBC 3/22/22]

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The following are the top reasons U.S. workers left a job in 2021: Low pay, no advancement opportunities.

	Major <u>Reason</u>	Minor <u>Reason</u>	Net <u>_____</u>
Pay was too low	37	26	63
No opportunities for advancement	33	30	63
Felt disrespected at work	35	21	57
Childcare issues	24	24	48
Not enough flexibility to choose when to put in hours	24	21	45
Benefits weren't good	23	20	43
Wanted to relocate to a different area	22	13	35
Working too many hours	16	14	30
Employer required a COVID-19 vaccine	8	10	18

[PEW published 3/9/22]

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This and That

The United States Senate confirmed the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court. It will be the first time that four women have served on the Supreme Court at the same time. Judge – soon to be Justice – Jackson will not be sworn in or seated until Justice Breyer has in fact retired. Justice Jackson will be the 116th Supreme Court Justice.

Following is Judge Jackson's background:

- Law Clerk US District Court Mass, 1996-97
- Law Clerk U.S. Court of Appeals – 1st Circuit, 1997-98
- Supreme Court Law Clerk, 1999-2000 (Justice Breyer)

- Private practice, 2000-2003
 - Including Feinberg & Rosen LLP
- Office of the Federal Public Defender of DC
 - Assistant Public Defender, 2005-2007
- Vice Chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission, 2010-14
- Judge on US District Court for DC, 2013-2021
- Judge on US Court of Appeals for DC, 2021-currently
- 8.9 years of Judicial experience, more than justices Thomas, Roberts, Kagen & Barrett combined
 - More than:
 - 4 of the last 10 justices had at their confirmations
 - 9 of the last 17 at their confirmations
 - 43 of the last 58 appointed since 1900
- Married to Dr. Patrick G. Jackson, gastrointestinal surgeon – General surgeon at Georgetown University Hospital

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36% of Americans support Biden’s selection of Ketanji Brown Jackson to become an associate justice of the United States Supreme Court. 17% oppose his selection and 46% do not know enough about her. [NBC 3/22/22]

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Ben Franklin: The Thirteen Necessary Virtues

In *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, we find a list of thirteen virtues that “occurr’d to me as necessary or desirable.”

These names of virtues, with their precepts, are:

1. TEMPERANCE. Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. SILENCE. Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. ORDER. Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. RESOLUTION. Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. FRUGALITY. Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. INDUSTRY. Lose no time; be always employ’d in something useful; cut

off all unnecessary actions.

7. SINCERITY. Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

8. JUSTICE. Wrong none by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

9. MODERATION. Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

10. CLEANLINESS. Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

11. TRANQUILLITY. Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

12. CHASTITY. Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

13. HUMILITY. Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

[Thanks to Joel Jankowsky]

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While almost half of men in the United States support the idea of paid paternity leave, fewer than 5% take more than two weeks. [NYT 3/6/22]

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More than 87,000 Americans died of opioid overdoses over the 12 months that ended last September, according to preliminary federal data.

Narcan or naloxone is a drug that can quickly reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

To help to reduce the number of overdose deaths, free vending machines are popping up around the country to dispense doses of this drug. These vending machines are being installed in New York, Los Angeles, Michigan, Indiana, and Kentucky. [Axios—What's Next 1/11/22]

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2.55 million middle school and high school students are regular users of some type of tobacco product – combustible, smokeless, or electronic. This amounts to 13% of high school students and 4% of middle school students.

The number of users grows when students are asked whether they have ever tried these products. 6.5 million youths said yes – 34% of high school and 11% of middle school students. [WP 3/22/22]

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Odds and Ends

75% of people in the United States never tweet.

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Nearly three times more Americans 56%, donated to charities during the pandemic than typically give money to politicians and parties. [Axios Finish Line 3/7/22]

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Tesla CEO Elon Muck has acquired a 9% stake in Twitter to become the largest shareholder.

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In Sri Lanka, government is a family affair. The President is Gabaya Rajapaka. His brother, Mahinda Rajapaka, is the country's prime minister and another brother, Basil Rajapaka, is the finance minister. [NYT 3/26/22]

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In 2003, more than 90% of respondents to a survey conducted by the C.D.C. said they had an operational landline phone in their homes. As of June 2021, that number had dropped to just over 30%. [NYT 3/24/22]

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A recent poll found that half of Americans approve of mask mandates, down from 75% who supported them in December 2020. [NYT 3/12/22]

Automobile sales in America account for close to a trillion dollars in annual economic activity and provide 2.3 million jobs. [NYT 4/3/22]

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A friend regularly collects the Safeway food buying coupons that come in the Saturday Washington Post. Yesterday she went grocery shopping. The cost of what she selected was \$70.00. When the value of the coupons was deducted, her final bill was \$40.00.

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Since “The Bachelor” debuted on ABC in March 2002 and the “The Bachelorette” the following year, only six couples who met on those shows are currently married. [NYT 4/3/22]

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Quotes

“I don’t understand how you could not get more humble. It’s obvious how much luck and help it took to get me here.”

Mike Allen,
Axios Finish Line 3/17/22

“Close your eyes for one minute, and picture all the people who helped you get where you are today.”

Fred Rogers,
As quoted in Axios Finish Line 3/17/22

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George Washington’s Rules of Civility

- It is good manners to prefer them to whom we speak before ourselves, especially if they be above us with whom in no sort we ought to begin.
- Strive not with you superiors in argument, but always submit your judgement to others with modesty.
- Undertake not to each your equal in the art himself professes, it savors of arrogance.
- Do not express joy before one sick or in pain, but that contrary passion will aggravate his misery.

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Quotes by Mother Teresa

“One of the realities we’re all called to go through is to move from repulsion to compassion and from compassion to wonderment.”

“We cannot give what we have not got.”

“If we are humble, nothing will change us, neither praise, nor discouragement.”

“Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is beauty, admire it. Life is a dream realize it.”

“Do not allow yourselves to be disheartened by any failure as long as you have done your best.”

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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>
MAR’22	40/55	xxx	xxx	45/54	40/53
FEB’22	xxx	38/57	42/57	xxx	37/56
JAN’22	44/54	xxx	xxx	47/52	35/54
DEC’21	xxx	xxx	48/52	47/51	xxx
NOV’21	xxx	xxx	45/54	xxx	xxx
NOV’21	xxx	38/57	48/52	44/54	38/53
OCT’21	45/52	xxx	xxx	xxx	40/51
OCT’21	xxx	xxx	50/50	46/53	40/53
SEPT’21	xxx	xxx	xxx	50/49	44/50
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

<u>Date</u>	<u>ECON/YOUGOV</u>	<u>POL/MORNCON</u>
MAR’22	45/49	42/54
MAR’22	41/53	42/55
MAR’22	44/49	45/51
FEB’22	42/53	43/53
FEB’22	41/51	41/56
FEB’22	45/49	xxx
JAN’22	xxx	43/54
JAN’22	41/51	42/55
JAN’22	42/53	xxx

JAN'22	45/51	40/56
DEC'21	42/53	46/51
DEC'21	xxx	43/53
NOV'21	44/50	xxx
NOV'21	43/51	44/53
NOV'21	45/49	46/51
OCT'21	xxx	45/52
OCT'21	42/51	46/51
OCT'21	44/49	45/52
SEPT'21	46/48	47/50
AUG'21	47/46	47/49
AUG'21	48/46	50/48
AUG'21	47/47	51/46
AUG'21	49/44	52/46
JULY'21	49/45	52/45
JULY'21	50/43	52/44

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As of March 27, 2022, the following is Biden's approval rating based on Real Clear Politics.

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	
Over all	41.2%	53.1%	3/27/22
On the economy	37.8%	57.2 %	3/22/22
On foreign policy	41.2%	52.6%	3/22/22

Gallup now does monthly or semi-monthly surveys of all adults. WW will include a periodic polling summary of 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>
3/18/22	42%	54%	42.1%	52.8%
2/17/22	41%	55%	41.4%	53.0%
1/16/22	40%	56%	42.5%	52.1%
12/16/21	43%	51%	43.7%	50.7%
11/16/21	42%	55%	42.8%	51.7%
10/19/21	42%	52%	44.1%	49.9%
9/17/21	43%	53%	45.7%	48.8%

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%

Using Gallup (all adults) as the marker – Biden’s approval rating has fallen by 12 points and his disapproval has grown by a similar amount.

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

As of March 23, 2022, the United States Senate has confirmed 56 federal judges nominated by President Biden. 14 judges for the United States Courts of Appeals and 32 judges for the United States District Courts.

There are currently 4 vacancies on the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 64 vacancies on the U.S. District Courts, and 2 vacancies in the United States Court of International Trade.

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 – 1 year +	56	0	15	41	
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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There are roughly 4,000 politically appointed positions in the executive branch and independent agencies, including more than 1,200 that require Senate confirmation.

The Washington Post and the Partnership for Public Service are tracking 800 of those 1200 positions.

- 317 have been confirmed by the Senate
- 171 nominees are being considered by the Senate
- 5 picks are awaiting formal nomination
- 117 positions have no Biden nominee
- 188 appointees are serving in termed positions or were held over from previous administrations

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for 3/22/22.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Biden	42.9	52.0
Harris	37.2	51.0
Pelosi	35.0	56.0
McCarthy	22.7	42.0
Schumer	29.0	46.0
McConnell	24.0	58.0

2022 Election

The 117th Congress Congress

A record number of women are serving in the 117th Congress (120 members of the House and 24 members of the Senate). This is the highest percentage in U.S. history. [PEW 1/15/21]

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Earmarks are back. Earmarks have been banned in Congress for a decade. Many people thought that earmarking by members of Congress was the definition of corruption.

The current congressional leaders have realized that giving lawmakers the chance to fund projects for their communities back home is actually a great way to get votes for legislation. Some folks have suggested that bringing back earmarks

could help bring back bipartisanship. [That last suggestion may be a stretch. WW]
[WP 3/10/22]

It is true that Democrats have grown slightly more liberal over the past five decades. It is also true that Republicans have grown far more conservative over that same time and, in so doing, have moved the overall ideological center of the House to the right as well. [Chris Cillizza 3/15/22]

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There is a recent survey on the potential for unionization of Capital Hill aides ordered by Punchbowl News.

45% of staff said they opposed efforts to unionize Capitol Hill aides.
39% supported it and 16% did not know.
77% of Democrats support the effort.
87% of Republican staffers opposed the effort.
13% of Republican staffers and 19% of Democratic staffers have no opinion.
56% of respondents said they would not vote to join the union.
97% of Republican said they would not vote to join the union.
36% of Senate aides said they support the effort while 39% oppose it.
[Punchbowl News 4/4/22]

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Beginning with the 95th Congress (1977-1979) and ending with the 117th Congress (2021-2023) there have been a total of 23 congresses. 13 have been controlled by Democrats and 10 controlled by Republicans.

The 95th – 103rd were controlled by the Democrats.
The 104th – 109th were controlled by the Republicans.
The 110th – 111th were controlled by the Democrats.
The 112th – 115th were controlled by the Republicans.
The 116th – 117th were controlled by the Democrats. [U.S. House Archives]

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Approval of the Congress began to drop in mid-2021. It seems to have leveled off.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 3/2/22	21.8%	67.8%
Real Clear Pol. 2/1/22	21%	67.2%

Real Clear Pol. 12/21/21	23%	65.8%
Real Clear Pol. 11/30/21	22.2%	68.6%
Real Clear Pol. 10/12/21	25.0%	65.8%
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%

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Currently:

Democrats - 222 seats
 Republicans – 210 seats
 Vacancies - 3 seats

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As of March 27, 2022, there are currently 47 seats in which House incumbents have announced they are not running for re-election because they are either running for another office or retiring. 17 of those seats are currently held by Republicans and 30 by Democrats.

Five Republican members of the House and four Democratic members of the House are running for the U.S. Senate. 1 Republican member and 2 Democratic members are running for governor.

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The dates have now been set for the special election to fill the seat of Congressman Don Young, who at the time of his death was the longest serving Republican member of the House of Representatives.

51 people have filed to be on the ballot for the June 11th special primary election to serve out the balance of this year. One of the most well-known candidates is Sarah Palin, former governor, and former vice-presidential candidate.

The top four candidates of the June 11th primary will face off on August 16, 2022, the primary date for the November general election. For the first time, Alaska will use Ranked Choice Voting this year.

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Voters are split on midterm vote intentions.

43% of registered voters say they will vote for/lean toward the Democratic candidate in their district while a like amount of 43% say they will vote for/lean toward the Republican candidate in their district. 4% plan to vote for another candidate and 10% are not sure for whom they are likely to vote. [PEW 3/13/22]

A similar result was found in another survey. Folks were asked what their preference is for the outcome of November’s congressional elections. 46% said their preference was for a Republican controlled Congress and 44% said their preference was for a Democrat controlled Congress. [NBC 3/22/22]

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THE SENATE

[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

Six U.S. Senators are retiring from public office; 1 Democrat and 5 Republicans. None are running for other office.

	S		
	<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
	OPEN (Leahy)	Kennedy
	Murray	MO – open
		OH – Open
		Hoeven
		Lankford
		Scott
		Thune
		Lee
Likely	1	2
	Hassan	Rubio
		PA Open
Lean	0	1
		NC - open
Toss Up	3	1
	Cortez Masto	Johnson
	Warnock	
	Kelly	

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2024 Election

The following people have indicated or been commonly named as someone thinking about or planning to run for president in 2024, some only if Biden decides not to run for re-election.

For the Republican nomination

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
Tim Scott – U.S. Senator
Mike Pence – Former Vice President
Chris Christie – Former Governor New Jersey

56% of GOP voters would vote for Trump if the 2024 GOP primary were today. [Morning Consult 3/27/22]

“I’d be very fortunate if I had the same man running against me.” - President Joe Biden

For the Democrat nomination if Biden does not run

Kamala Harris – Vice President
Pete Buttigieg – Secretary of Transportation
Elizabeth Warren – U.S. Senator
Amy Klobuchar – U.S. Senator
Roy Cooper – Governor of North Carolina
Mitch Landrieu – former Mayor of New Orleans (now working to implement infrastructure bill)
Gina Raimondo – Secretary of Commerce, former Governor of Rhode Island
Gretchen Whitmer – Governor of Michigan
Phil Murphy – Governor of New Jersey
J.B. Pritzker – Governor of Illinois
Stacey Abrams – currently running for Governor of Georgia

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Women Will Get It Done

Women in the United States continue to earn less than men on average. Among full-time, year around workers in 2019, women’s median annual earning was 82% of men’s.

There is hope for change.

The gender gap is narrower among younger workers nationally and the gap varies according to geographical area.

In fact, in 22 of 250 U.S. metropolitan areas, women under the age of 30 earn the same amount or more than their male counterparts.

- There are 10 metro areas where young women earn the most relative to young men – 120% to 102%.
- 10 metro areas where young women earn the least relative to young men – 77% to 67%
- 107 metro areas where young women earn between 99% to 90% of young men
 - 47% of young women working full time, year-round lived in these areas in 2019.
- 103 metro areas where young women earn between 89% to 80% of young men
- 14 metro area where young women earn between 79% to 70% of young men
- 4 metro areas where young women earn between 69% to 67% of young men

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Keechant Sewell, sworn in as New York City’s police commissioner in January, is the first woman to lead the largest police force in the nation. [NYT 2/26/22]

For the first time since its debut 40 years ago, the N.C.A.A. Division 1 Women’s basketball tournament will be officially call “March Madness” – the term that, until last fall, was reserved exclusively for the men’s tournament. [NYT 2/26/22]

Kristin Crowley will be Los Angeles’ first female and openly gay fire chief. [3/1/22]

Meta Platforms’ CFO Sheryl Sandberg has some thoughts on how the global situation might be different if more women ran the world’s countries. In an interview with CNBC Sandberg said, “No two countries run by women would ever go to war.”

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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?

* * * * *

Hearts Touch with Fire:
How Great Leaders are Made
by David Gergen

A powerful guide to the art of leadership from David Gergen—former White House adviser to four US presidents, CNN analyst, and founder of the Harvard Center for Public Leadership.

As nations careen from one crisis to the next, there is a growing cry for fresh leadership. Those in charge have repeatedly fallen short, and trust in institutions has plummeted. So, what does great leadership look like? And how are great leaders made?

David Gergen, a leader in the public arena for more than half a century, draws from his experiences as a White House adviser to four presidents, his decades as a trusted voice on national issues, and years of teaching and mentoring young people to offer a stirring playbook for the next generation of change-makers.

To uncover the fundamental elements of effective leadership, Gergen traces the journeys of iconic leaders past and present, from pathbreakers like Ruth Bader Ginsburg, John Lewis, John McCain, and Harvey Milk to historic icons like Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, Winston Churchill, and Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt, to contemporary game changers like Greta Thunberg, the Parkland students, and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Leadership is a journey that starts from within, Gergen writes. A leader must become self-aware and then achieve self-mastery. You cannot lead others until you can lead yourself. As you start to leap into the world, you begin your outer journey, overcoming setbacks, persuading others, empowering them, and navigating crises—armed a sense of history, humor, passion, and purpose.

By linking lessons of the past with the ever-changing practice of leadership today, Gergen reveals the time-tested secrets of dynamic leadership. An indispensable manual, *Hearts Touched With Fire* distills experience and wisdom of the past into an invaluable guide for leaders of our future.

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FUNNY BUSINESS
The Legendary Life and Political Satire of Art Buchwald
by Michael Hill

Scenes from the life and career of one of the 20th century's most famous satirists. Art Buchwald (1925-2007) once wrote, "The satirist has his job laid out. He must wake people up so they will wake themselves." Few journalists of his time woke up readers as effectively and hilariously. His 50-year career began when he talked his way into a job at the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune* even though his only experience was as a part-time stringer reviewing films and plays for *Variety*. At the peak of his influence, his column appeared in 550 newspapers in 100 countries and was read by Washington power brokers, including presidents. Not bad for a Jewish kid from New York who didn't grow up in the usual political-leader demographic and who spent years in foster homes after his mother was committed to an asylum.

In this affectionate book, Hill tells the story of Buchwald's fascinating life, marked by bouts of depression that required hospitalization, through a selection of his funniest articles and speeches and previously unpublished correspondence with members of the Kennedy family, William F. Buckley Jr., P.G. Wodehouse, and others.

Except for a long section on Buchwald's legal battle against Paramount—he sued them for stealing the idea that became the film *Coming to America*—the book is a series of short sections that focus on Buchwald's friendships and writings. The result is a tapas bar of a text, bite-sized snacks that add up to a satisfying whole. It's an incomplete picture—Hill mentions Buchwald's play *Sheep on the Runway* but not his absurdist English-language contributions to the dialogue in Jacques Tati's film *Playtime*—yet Buchwald fans will enjoy revisiting his work. Neophytes will get a taste of his style, as in the famous article "J. Edgar Hoover Just Doesn't Exist," in which Buchwald claimed the former FBI director was a "mythical person first thought up by *Reader's Digest*." A heartfelt tribute to one of American journalism's most influential jesters.

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Growing Up Biden
by Valerie Biden Owens

A memoir from Valerie Biden Owens, Joe Biden's younger sister, trusted confidante and lifelong campaign manager. Valerie, one of the first female

campaign managers in United States history, writes of the role of family, faith, and fate in shaping her life, and the power of empathy and kindness in the face of turmoil and division.

Growing Up Biden details Valerie's decades-long professional career in politics, and the central role she played in her brother's life as an insightful adviser, an ever-loyal advocate and best friend.

This memoir, full of candor and warmth, brings readers into the Biden home and shares stories from growing up in Delaware as the only daughter of the close-knit Irish Catholic family. Valerie writes in a compelling, relatable way about the challenges she faced breaking through gender barriers, the elusive nature of confidence, and navigating professional responsibilities while raising children.

* * * * *

Groundskeeping
by Lee Cole

An indelible love story about two very different people navigating the entanglements of class and identity and coming of age in an America coming apart at the seams—this is "an extraordinary debut about the ties that bind families together and tear them apart across generations" (Ann Patchett, best-selling author of *The Dutch House*).

In the run-up to the 2016 election, Owen Callahan, an aspiring writer, moves back to Kentucky to live with his Trump-supporting uncle and grandfather. Eager to clean up his act after wasting time and potential in his early twenties, he takes a job as a groundskeeper at a small local college, in exchange for which he is permitted to take a writing course.

Here he meets Alma Hazdic, a writer in residence who seems to have everything that Owen lacks—a prestigious position, an Ivy League education, success as a writer. They begin a secret relationship, and as they grow closer, Alma—who comes from a liberal family of Bosnian immigrants—struggles to understand Owen's fraught relationship with family and home.

Exquisitely written; expertly crafted; dazzling in its precision, restraint, and depth of feeling, *Groundskeeping* is a novel of haunting power and grace from a prodigiously gifted young writer.

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What Will I Do with My Love Today
Written by Kristen Chenoweth
Illustrated by Maine Diaz

A wonderful addition to children's books by celebrities and picture books about love and friendship, Kristin Chenoweth's whimsical adventure about adopting a dog reminds young readers they have an abundance of love and kindness to share with all of God's creatures.

What Will I Do with My Love Today? is a sweet adventure picture book by celebrity Kristin Chenoweth, known for debuting the role of Glinda in Broadway's *Wicked* and her Emmy Award-winning performance in *Pushing Daisies*. This heartfelt story follows young Kristi Dawn around New York City as she shares her love through acts of generosity--from singing in the church choir to helping a neighbor weed her garden. When she meets a lonely dog looking for a home, Kristi Dawn shows that adoption is one of the most loving and life-changing gifts of all.

Through delightful rhyme and examples of child-friendly (and pup-friendly!) acts of generosity and kindness, Chenoweth shares the powerful message that the more love you give, the more love you get back! This jacketed picture book

- is perfect for ages 4 to 8
- tells a meaningful story alongside playful illustrations from Maine Diaz
- is a great gift for baby showers, adoption parties, soon-to-be older siblings, and dog-loving kids
- is a meaningful way to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day, National Dog Day, and National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day
- is a fun gift for fans of Kristin Chenoweth or other celebrity children's book authors

An inspiring read-aloud, *What Will I Do with My Love Today?* encourages kids to look for ways to be kind and loving every day--because that's the best way for love to grow!

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Restaurants

Pines of Rome
4918 Cordell Ave
Bethesda, MD

301-657-8775

Debbie and I went to Pines of Rome with Francine and Mel.

For some 50 years the Pines has operated in the D.C. area. Prior to its current location it was located at 4709 Hampden Lane where it was for 45 years after its opening in 1972. It moved to its current location in October 2017.

The owner, Chef Marco Troiano, derives the menu from the small peasant town in southern Italy where he grew up.

There are 65 items on the menu – Seafood - 12 items, Meat 16 - items, Antipasti – 6 items, Eggplant & Appetizers -7 items, Homemade Pasta – 6 items, Spaghetti – 7 items, Pizza- 4 items, Desserts – 4 items, and Garlic Bread – 1 item.

We created a smorgasbord of dishes which were shared by all. One large white Pizza with Fontina Cheese, Sausage in tomato sauce, Sauteed Mushroom, Fried Zucchini, Fried Calamari, White Cannellini beans, Tartufo Ice Cream and Rum Cake.

A recent story in a local newspaper about the restaurant says that it seats up to 135 people but when we checked with the folks running the place the answer was that it seats 170.

The restaurant has two floors. An entry level floor which is where we were seated, and a second floor which can only be reached by two sets of stairs.

I did not check out the restroom because it was difficult to reach from where we were seated. To reach it, one would first have to walk up to the second floor and then walk down another set of stairs from the back of the second floor to the restroom.

Mike

325 7th St, NW, STE 825
Washington, DC 20004

202-728-1100
mberman@dubersteingroup.com