

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 201

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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

22% of registered voters say the country is headed in the right direction. 67% of registered voters say the country is on the wrong track.

	<u>Right track</u>	<u>Wrong track</u>
Male	24%	64%
Female	19%	68%
Democrats	38%	46%
Republicans	8%	89%
Independents	18%	71%
Urban	33%	53%
Suburban	18%	70%
Rural	14%	74%

[Econ/YouGov 6/12/22]

In the previous issue of the Washington Watch, on May 3rd Econ/YouGov said 27% of registered voters said the country was on the right track and 62% said it was on the wrong track.

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Roe v Wade Overturned

The Supreme Court overturned the landmark Roe v. Wade ruling that guaranteed a constitutional right to abortion, a momentous break from a half-century of rulings on one of the nation’s most contentious issues. About half the states have already indicated they would move to ban the procedure.

The court ruled 6-3 to uphold a Mississippi abortion ban being challenged in the case and 5-4 to overturn Roe. In the majority opinion, Justice Samuel Alito wrote that the court’s decision in Roe “sparked a national controversy that has embittered our political culture for a half century.”

Legal scholars said the decision to overrule Roe is one of the few times the Supreme Court has ever invalidated an earlier decision that declared a constitutional right — and the only time it took away a right that had considerable public support.

The ruling came in a dispute over a 2018 law passed by Mississippi's Republican-controlled Legislature that banned abortions after 15 weeks. The law, which made exceptions for medical emergencies or cases of severe fetal abnormality but not for rape or incest, was immediately challenged and put on hold by lower courts.

The law constituted a direct attack on the court's landmark 1973 Roe v. Wade decision as well as a follow-on ruling in 1992, Planned Parenthood v. Casey, under which states could impose some restrictions on abortion before viability, provided they did not constitute an "undue burden" on the right of access to the procedure. But flat-out bans before viability, generally considered to be about 24 weeks into a pregnancy, were deemed to be unconstitutional.

Those rulings are no longer the law of the land, in part because of the court's changed composition. Two members of the court who joined in its earlier abortion decisions, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Anthony Kennedy, were succeeded by justices appointed by then-President Donald Trump: Amy Coney-Barrett and Brett Kavanaugh. Trump had declared that he would put "pro-life justices on the court."

"We hold that Roe and Casey must be overruled," Alito wrote in the opinion, which was backed by Justices Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch (also appointed by Trump), Kavanaugh, and Barrett. "The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of Roe and Casey now chiefly rely — the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment."

"It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives," he wrote, calling the original Roe decision "egregiously wrong and deeply damaging." [NBC 6/24/22]

This action by the Supreme Court is likely to lead to abortion bans in 26 states. [AP News]

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Inflation has changed many things including the price of a hamburger. The following is the year-over-year (April 2021 – April 2022) change in the price of selected ingredients of a hamburger.

Roll +10.1%; Lettuce +12.7%; Tomato +0.4%; Bacon +17.7%; Ground Beef +14.8%; Sauce condiments +9.2%. [Statista 5/19/22] (Thanks to Jay Berman)

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The federal budget deficit shrank by \$350 billion during President Biden’s first year in office and is expected to fall more than \$1 trillion by October, the end of this year’s federal budget year. [NYT 5/21/22]

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Axios and the Harris Poll gauge the reputation of the 100 most visible brands in America. The following are the #1 - #10 and #96 - #100 entries in the 2022 report.

1. Trader Joe’s; 2. HEB Grocery; 3. Patagonia; 4. The Hershey Company; 5. Wegmans; 6. Samsung; 7. Amazon.com; 8. Toyota; 9. Honda Motor Company; 10. Sony.

96. Fox Corporation; 97. Facebook; 98. Twitter; 99. Wish.com; 100. Trump Organization. [Axios 5/24/22]

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States in the South and Midwest of the country are exercising increased book censorship. Leading the list is the state of Texas in which 713 titles in Texas schools and libraries were removed between July 2021 and April 2022. Among those banned are stories that carry a political message as well as a high number of books that include LGBTQI+ content. The list below shows the states that have implemented the highest number of book bans this year:

Texas – 713; Pennsylvania – 456; Florida – 204; Oklahoma – 43; Kansas – 30; Indiana – 18; Tennessee – 16; Virginia – 16; Missouri – 15; Georgia – 13. [Statista]

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Tracking Trust in U.S. Institutions

Shares of U.S. adults who report have “some” or “a lot of” trust in the following institutions.

	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Dems</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Government	39%	53%	33%	
Congress	33	42	31	24%
Supreme Court	46	43	61	38%
Electoral Process	44	50	39	
State Government	51	59	53	

Local government	56	61	60	
	<u>Baby Boomers</u>	<u>Gen X</u>	<u>Millennial</u>	<u>Gen Z</u>
Government	44%	35%	39%	32%
Congress	32	31	35	31
Supreme Court	54	52	42	33
Electoral Process	53	43	39	30
State government	61	46	49	38
Local government	69	50	49	45

[Morning Consult 6/9/22]

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Big cities saw population declines during the pandemic.

Between July 1, 2020 and July 1, 2021, the population has dropped in seven of the nine largest cities in the United States.

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Drop in population</u>
New York	8,500,000	3.5%
Los Angeles	3,800,000	1.5
Chicago	2,700,000	1.6
Houston	2,300,000	0.5
Philadelphia	1,600,000	1.5
San Diego	1,400,000	0.3
Dallas	1,300,000	1.1

The population has grown in two of the nine largest cities.

Phoenix	1,600,000	+ 0.8
San Antonio	1,500,000	+ 0.9

San Francisco, population 846,000, experienced the highest percentage population loss of the 15 largest cities in America, 55,000 people, 6.5% of its 2020 level. [Axios 5/26/22]

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In June of this year, 29% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say they trust the government just about always/most of the time. This compares to 9% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents who

say the same thing. [Pew Research 6/8/22]

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Guns

The U.S. Supreme Court declared it a constitutional right to carry a weapon in public for self-defense purposes, overturning a 108-year-old New York Law requiring people to show they have “proper cause” to carry a concealed weapon. The ruling will have major implications for gun control laws in the U.S. [Axios 6/23/22]

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On June 25th President Biden signed the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. The Act contains the following provisions:

- Enhanced background checks for younger buyers
- Incentives for states to implement red flag laws
- Closing the ‘boyfriend loophole’
- Funding for mental health and school safety
- Tougher penalties on illegal purchases

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The leading cause of death among American children is now guns. As of 2020, 5.3 deaths per 100,000 children were caused by guns while 4.9 deaths per 100,000 children were caused by motor vehicle accidents.

Following are the 10 states with the highest number of deaths per 100,000 children in 2020.

Louisiana – 12.9; Alaska – 12; Mississippi – 10.9; South Carolina – 9.9; Arkansas – 9.8; Kansas – 8.9; Indiana – 8.7; Kentucky – 8.6; Missouri – 8.5; Alabama – 7.8.

The National Shooting Sports Foundation estimates that there are more than 20 million AR-15-style guns circulating in the United States. [NYT 5/29/22]

In October 2015, Texas Governor Greg Abbott expressed “embarrassment” that Texas was #2, behind California for new gun purchases. [Texas Public Radio 10/29/15]

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The following is based on Pew Research Center analysis of data from the CDC, the FBI, and other sources. (It is likely that the figures understate the true numbers. WW)

Suicides account for 54% of gun deaths in 2020 while 43% of gun deaths were caused by murder.

45,222 total gun deaths in 2020 were the most on record. This was a 14% increase from the year before, a 25% increase from five years earlier, and a 43% increase from a decade earlier.

Four-in-ten U.S. adults say they live in a household with a gun. 30% say they personally own a gun. 11% don't own a gun but live in a household in which someone does

48% of Americans say that gun violence is a very big problem in the country today and an additional 24% say it is a moderately big problem.

82% of black Democrats along with 58% of Hispanic Democrats and 39% of White democrats say that gun violence is a very big problem.

73% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents say that gun violence is a big problem, a view that is held by only 18% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents.

53% of Americans favor stricter gun laws (April 2021 survey) a number that has fluctuated. It remains the case that there is a large difference between the views of Democrats and Republicans.

34% say that if more people owned guns there would be more crime. 34% say there would be no difference in the amount of crime while 31% say there would be less crime.

49% say there would be fewer mass shootings if it was harder for people to obtain guns legally, 42% say it would not make any difference while 9% say there would be more mass shootings. [PEW Research 4/11/21-6/27/21]

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68% of all voters now support stricter gun control laws while 27% oppose stricter laws. From mid-May to the first week of June, the number of supporters has grown while the number of oppose has dropped.

90% of Democrats support stricter laws while 7% oppose.

67% of Independents support stricter laws while 23% oppose

44% of Republicans support stricter laws while 51% oppose.

[Morning Consult 6/12/22]

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55% of U.S. adults say they live within an hour's drive at of at least some of their extended family members. 28% say they live near most of their extended family while 27% say they live near some of their extended family.

Americans in rural communities are most likely to live near extended family as are those living in the northeast or Midwest.

63% of adults with a high school diploma or less are likely to have at least some extended family members within an hour's drive while that is true of only 42% of those with postgraduate degrees. [PEW 5/18/22]

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59% of Americans believe that sometimes laws are needed to protect folks from themselves. 39% say it is not the government's job to protect people from themselves.

61% of Republicans say, it's not the government's job to protect people from themselves. But 77% of Democrats say laws are sometimes needed for that purpose.

By 52% to 39% adults have greater confidence in career employees at federal agencies than those officials appointed by the president to oversee agencies.

65% of adults, including nearly identical share in both parties, say that most people who seek office at the local, state, or federal level do so to serve their own personal interests. By contrast, just 21% say that all or most people who run for office do so in order to serve their communities. [PEW 6/6/22]

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Title IX

The historical impact of Title IX extends far beyond the reaches of sports. The landmark legislation, which prohibited sex-based discrimination in federally funded schools and education programs, was passed 50 years ago on June 23, 1972. It coincided with enormous growth in educational attainment for American women and has been applied toward reducing sexual violence on campus and promoting transgender rights in recent years. But athletics have been at the center of Title IX from the very beginning. Title IX challenged the long-standing notion that sports belonged to men — and men only. And its effects were felt both in the short term and over the half-century that has followed.

In 1971, the year before Title IX's passage, fewer than 300,000 girls participated in sports at the high school level in the U.S., according to data from the National Federation of State High School Associations. That number represented just 8 percent of the boys participating in sports at that time. In the 1966-67 sports season, around 15,000 women participated in college sports at NCAA institutions (including recreational sports), or about 10 percent of the participation number for men. While college enrollment also skewed male in that era — men represented 59 percent of total postsecondary fall enrollment in 1970 — it was clear that women were severely underrepresented in the athletic ranks prior to Title IX's passage.

That started to change quickly after Title IX went into effect. Participation in girls' high school sports rose by 178 percent (from under 300,000 to more than 800,000) in the first year of Title IX, and by an annual average of 101 percent year-over-year for the first six years the law was in place. It should be noted, though, that boys' participation also increased over the span, albeit by a smaller degree. By the end of Title IX's first decade, total girls' participation was 53.1 percent that of boys — a major improvement over the 8 percent figure in 1971, though not nearly at a level of true gender parity.

[538 Newsletter 6/1/22]

Of those who have heard about Title IX:

63% of adults say it has had a positive impact on gender equality in the U.S.

62% of men

64% of women

75% of Democrats/leaner
49% of Republicans/leaners

37% of adults say title IX has not gone far enough
29% of men
46% of women
51% of Democrats/leaners
19% Republicans/leaners

[PEW 4/21/22] [Thanks to Jay Berman]

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55% of Americans support requiring colleges, universities to provide an equal number of athletic scholarships to men and women 11% oppose that.

54% of Americans say that colleges and universities have not gone far enough to give female college athletes equal opportunities. Only 8% say they have gone too far.

39% of Americans have heard ‘nothing at all about Title IX’ and an additional 28% have heard ‘not much’. [WP/UMD 5/17/22]

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The following is an edited version of an article from NCAA News, provided to WW by Jay Berman (not a relative but a special friend).

A look back at how Senator Birch Bayh helped the landmark legislation get its start 50 years ago...

Thirty-seven words have sustained a legacy over the past 50 years.

When U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh authored the words: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance," Title IX came into being.

Bayh, a Democrat representing Indiana, was hopeful the federal legislation would have an impact, but even he couldn't foresee what was to come.

Bayh, who died in 2019 at the age of 91, was able to witness the impact of his work. So much so, that out of all the political accomplishments he had in his career, Title IX was the legislation he was most proud of.

"He always said this is his single greatest achievement," said Jay Berman, who was a member of Bayh's staff from 1965-76, including being chief of staff his final two years of working for the senator. "We didn't think Title IX would have the impact that it has had on sports. But he was just as concerned about women not having the opportunity to play sports as he was about not being able to get into medical school or law school."

Bayh could list legislative accomplishments that include being the only lawmaker since the founders to author two amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The 25th Amendment on presidential and vice-presidential succession and the 26th Amendment that lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 were penned by him.

Bayh's inspiration for Title IX came from his wife, Marvella, who died in 1979.

Marvella Hern grew up in Oklahoma and was an outstanding student. One of her favorite people she studied in history was Thomas Jefferson, who founded the University of Virginia.

Marvella wanted to attend Virginia, but her application was returned: "Women need not apply."

When Bayh was named the co-recipient of the NCAA Gerald R. Ford Award at the 2006 NCAA Convention that celebrated the Association's 100-year anniversary, he told the NCAA News: "We spent 26½ years together with Marvella teaching me about what it was really like being a woman in a man's world. Without her, I know I wouldn't understand the importance of this legislation."

Berman said Marvella Bayh would inform her husband about the discrimination that women faced, and since they faced it in education, women ended up having few professional opportunities in the workforce.

How Title IX came into being

In the two years preceding the passage of Title IX, debates about discrimination against women and education were raging in Congress.

Bayh was an advocate, and in 1971 he tried to make an amendment to the Education Act. However, Sen. Strom Thurmond, of South Carolina, raised an objection and asked for a parliamentary inquiry as to whether the amendment was germane.

The parliamentarian ruled that since sex was never mentioned in the Education Act, it wasn't germane, stalling the amendment. Undeterred, Bayh came back in 1972 and introduced the Title IX provision.

Bayh and his staff made a legislative deal with Sen. Jim Eastland, a Mississippi Democrat, and the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to help bring the Equal Rights Amendment to a vote.

Sen. Bayh said of all the legislation he worked on throughout his career, Title IX was the accomplishment he was most proud of.

Through negotiations, the Equal Rights Amendment was passed in March 1972, sending it to the states for ratification, and Title IX later became law June 23, 1972, with the Education Amendments.

Rep. Green and Rep. Patsy Mink, of Hawaii, championed the Title IX legislation in the House.

Working in a bipartisan way to pass legislation in Congress may sound impossible in this age of political divide.

"Our system isn't the problem; it's the people in the system," Berman said. "The rules and process haven't changed, but it is the people in it and how they use the rules and process."

"They didn't want to wake the bear," Berman said. "It was an incredibly strategic move, and it worked. If you look at the U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding Title IX, the justices look at the history and one person is cited, and that's Birch Bayh. They ask the question, what did Birch Bayh mean when he wrote those 37 words.

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Employment

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for May 2022 is 3.6%. That unemployment rate is the same as the 3.6% rate of March and April 2022 and substantially less than the 5.5% unemployment rate of May 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 May was 7.1% up from 7.0% in April and less than 9.7% a

year earlier. The Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) in May is 62.3%, down from 62.2% in April 2022.

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The Demographics of Unemployment for May 2022

Unemployment by Gender (20 years and older)

Women –2.9% (up from last month)

Men –3.1% (same as last month)

Unemployment by Race

White – 3.2% (same as last month)

Black –6.2% (up from last month)

Hispanic – 4.3% (up from last month)

Asian –2.4% (down from last month)

Unemployment by Education (25 years & over)

Less than high school –5.2% (down from last month)

High School –3.8% (same last month)

Some college –3.4% (up from last month)

Bachelor’s Degree or higher – 2.0% (same as last month)

In April 2022, 27 states had unemployment rates below the national average of 3.6%. 23 states, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, had unemployment rates that were above the national average. Two states, Colorado and West Virginia, had unemployment rates that were the same as the national average.

The state/territory with the highest unemployment rate in April was Puerto Rico at 6.4%.

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This and That

Belief in God

The change in belief in God between (2013-17; average from surveys in 2013, 2014, 2017)

	<u>2013-2017</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Change</u> (% points)
Total	87%	81%	-6
Men	83	80	-3
Women	90	83	-7
Non-Hispanic whites	85	79	-6
18-29 years	78	68	-10
65+ years	90	87	-3
College Grads	83	78	-5
Non-college grad	89	84	-5
Married	89	88	-1
Not married	85	77	-8
Republican	95	92	-3
Independent	84	81	-3
Democrat	84	72	-12
Conservative	95	94	-1
Moderate	88	86	-2
Liberal	73	62	-11
East	82	78	-4
Midwest	87	79	-8
South	93	86	-7
West	82	80	-2
City resident	86	82	-4
Suburban resident	86	80	-6
Town/Rural resident	89	82	-7

Which comes closest to your view of God?

	<u>Hears prayers</u> <u>Intervenes</u>	<u>Hears Prayers</u> <u>only</u>	<u>Does</u> <u>neither</u>	<u>No belief</u> <u>in God</u>
Attends Service				
Weekly	74%	23%	2%	1%

Weekly/Monthly	50	36	10	3
Seldom/Never	28	27	15	28
Republican	54	31	7	7
Independent	39	30	12	18
Democrat	32	25	15	26
Conservative	56	30	8	5
Moderate	40	33	12	13
Liberal	25	21	16	35
18-29	30	29	9	32
30-49	40	27	14	17
50-64	50	29	10	9
65+	44	31	11	12

[Gallup 6/17/22]

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“Top Gun: Maverick”, a Tom Cruise film, took in \$156 million at theater box offices over the Memorial Day opening weekend, setting a United States historical record for that weekend.

The previous record holder was “Pirates of the Caribbean: At World’s End” a Johnny Depp film which earned \$153 million over the long weekend in 2007.

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Just 8% of Manhattan office workers were back in the office five days a week as of the week of May 7th, according to data released by the Partnership for New York City [NYT 5/15/22]

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In 2021, the highest paid beach lifeguard in L.A. earned \$510,000 including base, overtime, and other pay. 98 of the lifeguards at that beach made more than \$200,000.

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There are 2.4 doctors for every 1,000 residents in Mexico, according to the National Institute for Statistics, more than most countries in Latin America, and just below the United States, which has 2.6 doctors per 1,000 inhabitants. [NYT 6/8/22]

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The number of young people who identify as transgender nationally is about 300,000, according to a report by the Williams Institute, which is much higher than previous estimates. [NYT 6/19/22]

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Odds and Ends

About half of the plastic waste produced globally is expected to end up in a landfill – and less than a fifth is expected to be recycled. [Axios PM 3/3/22]

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Canada, blessed with greater forest acreage than any other affluent nation, saves money by importing toothpicks from China. [NYT 5/29/22]

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Trumpet the Bloodhound makes history by winning Best in Show at the 146th Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. In doing so he bested over 3,500 dogs of more than 200 different breeds for the ultimate prize. He is the first Bloodhound to win Best in Show in Westminster's history. The Best in Show winner is selected from seven competitors – Hound, Toy, Non-sporting, Sporting, Herding, Working and Terrier. [USAToday 6/22/22]

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Arsenic was so widely used in the 17th-century France to dispose of wealthy, aged relatives that it was nicknamed “poudre de succession” or “inheritance powder”. [NYT 6/5/22]

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Henry Ford, fearful of supply shortages, along with railroads to carry their output to his factories; amassed a fleet of ships; and erected a complex to handle every stage of turning raw materials into a finished automobile. [NYT 6/10/22]

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In 2021, 98.3% of federal criminal cases ended up as plea bargains.
[NYT 6/12/22]

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Ships carry boats, but not vice versa. Any surface vessel large enough to carry its own boats is a ship. [NYT 6/12/22]

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51% of U.S. parents say they'll spend over 20% of their income on childcare this year. In 2019, only 31% parents said they'd spend that much. [Axios What's Next 6/15/22]

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Quotes

“Great battles, won or lost, change the entire course of events, create new standards of values, new moods, new atmospheres, in armies and in nations, to which all must conform.”

-Duke of Marlborough (thanks to Joel Jankowsky)

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Quotes by Mother Teresa

“We do not need guns and bombs to bring peace, we need love and compassion.”

“Do extraordinary things with love.”

“True love is giving and giving until it hurts.”

“We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”

“Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time, and always start with the person nearest you.”

“You are greater than you know.”

“The way you help heal the world is you start with your own family.”

“The fruit of love is service, which is compassion in action.”

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Rules of Civility by George Washington

“In disputes be not so desirous to overcome as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion and submit to the judgement of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute.”

“Take no salt, nor cut your bread with your knife greasy.”

“If you soak your bread in the sauce, let it be no more than what you put in your mouth at a time: and blow not your broth at table and stay till it cools itself.”

“Rinse not your mouth in the presence of others.”

“Put not another bit into you mouth till the former be swallowed. Let not your morsels be too big.”

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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>
JUNE’22	xxx	xxx	xxx	43/57	35/56
MAY’22	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	38/55
MAY’22	42/54	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx
APR’22	xxx	42/52	41/59	45/53	40/51
APR’22	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	35/55
MAR’22	xxx	xxx	xxx	xxx	40/54
MAR’22	41/54	xxx	xxx	45/54	38/55
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

<u>Date</u>	<u>ECON/YOUGOV</u>	<u>POL/MORNCON</u>
JUNE’22	44/51	40/56
JUNE’22	43/51	39/58
MAY’22	44/51	42/56

MAY'22	43/51	44/54
MAY'22	42/51	42/55
APR'22	46/50	41/55
APR'22	43/51	45/52
APR'22	46/49	41/55
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	45/51	40/56
DEC'21	42/53	46/51
NOV'21	45/49	46/51
OCT'21	42/51	46/513
OCT'21	44/49	45/52
SEPT'21	46/48	47/50

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As of June 14, 2022, the following is Biden's approval rating based on Real Clear Politics.

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	
Over all	39.9%	54.4%	6/15/22
On the economy	33.6%	61.4 %	6/14/22
On foreign policy	39.0%	53.7%	6/14/22

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>
5/22/22	41%	54%	41.1%	54.3%
4/19/22	41%	56%	42.4%	53.1%
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%

Using Gallup (all adults) as the marker – Biden’s approval rating has fallen by 13 points in the last year and his disapproval has grown 14 points.

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Judges Nominated and Confirmed to Date

As of June 15, 2022, the United States Senate has confirmed 68 federal judges nominated by President Biden. One Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, 16 judges for the United States Courts of Appeals, and 51 judges for the United States District Courts.

There are currently 6 vacancies on the U.S. Courts of Appeals, 68 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	60	1	16	51	
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 799 of those 1200 positions.

- 357 have been confirmed by the Senate
- 137 nominees are being considered by the Senate
- 2 picks are awaiting formal nomination
- 101 positions have no Biden nominee
- 174 appointees are serving in termed positions or were held over from previous administrations [WP 6/9/22]

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The following are the favorability ratings for a variety of political leaders based on the Real Clear Politics averages for 6/14/22.

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Biden	43.6	52.7
Harris	39.4	52.1
Pelosi	34.0	57.4
McConnell	25.5	56.8
McCarthy	28.3	42.7
Schumer	30.0	46.8

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2022 Election

The 117th Congress

Congress

The following summarizes the total length of service of the current members of the House and Senate.

<u>Years of service</u>	<u>Senate</u>	<u>House</u>
0 – 6	26%	45%
More than 6, fewer than 12	37	27

More than 12, fewer than 18	18	12
More than 18, fewer than 24	8	6
More than 24, fewer than 30	7	7
More than 30	4	3

63% of the current members of the Senate and 72% of the current members of the House have served for less than 12 years.

The longest serving member of the House of Representatives and the Congress as a whole, in history, was John Dingell of Michigan who retired having served for 59 years and 21 days. The longest serving member of the Senate was Robert Byrd of West Virginia, who died in office having served for 57 years and 176 days.

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Approval of the Congress is down roughly 7 points from where it was a year ago and disapproval is up 8 points.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Real Clear Pol. 6/15/22	21.2%	69.0%
Real Clear Pol. 5/17/22	22.4%	68.0%
Real Clear Pol. 4/16/22	22.2%	67.5%
Real Clear Pol. 3/15/22	21.8%	67.8%
Real Clear Pol. 2/18/22	20.8%	68.32%
Real Clear Pol. 1/17/22	22.4%	66.4
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%

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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 – 220 seats

Republicans – 208 seats
 Vacancies – 7 seats

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As of 6/15/2022, there are currently 55 seats in which House incumbents have announced they are not running for re-election. 23 of those seats are currently held by Republicans and 32 by Democrats.

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Solid Democrat	162	Solid Republican	188
Likely Dem	13	Likely GOP	11
Lean Dem	13	Lean GOP	10
Dem Toss up	23	GOP Toss up	9
Total	211	Total	218

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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.

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Seats not up in 2022	34	30	2
Safe in 2022	9	14	
	Padilla	Murkowski	
	Murray	AL – open	
	Blumenthal	Boozman	
	Schatz	Grassley	
	Duckworth	Crapo	
	Van Hollen	Young	
	Schumer	Moran	
	Wyden	Paul	

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

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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. These lists are a result of the mining of a variety of other lists published in the last few months.

For the Republican nomination (A number of the folks on this list have said they will not run if Trump runs again.)

Donald Trump
Ben Sasse – U.S. Senator
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
Marco Rubio – U.S. Senator
Liz Cheney – U.S. Representative - Wyoming
Kristi Noem – Governor of South Dakota
Larry Hogan – Governor of Maryland

Asa Hutchison – Governor of Arkansas
Greg Abbott – Governor of Texas
Ron DeSantis – Governor of Florida
Mike Pence – Former Vice President
Mike Pompeo – Former Secretary of State
Nikki Haley – Former governor of South Carolina
Chris Christie – Former Governor New Jersey

For the Democrat nomination if Biden does not run

Kamala Harris – Vice President
Pete Buttigieg – Secretary of Transportation
Gina Raimondo – Secretary of Commerce, former Governor of Rhode Island
Elizabeth Warren – U.S. Senator
Amy Klobuchar – U.S. Senator
Bernie Sanders – U.S. Senator
Cory Booker – U.S. Senator
Sherrod Brown – U.S. Senator
Michael Bennet – U.S. Senator
Jamie Raskin – U.S. Representative, Maryland
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez – U.S. Representative, New York (She will be 35 years of age on October 13, 2024)
Roy Cooper – Governor of North Carolina
Gavin Newsom – Governor of California
Gretchen Whitmer – Governor of Michigan
Andy Besher – Governor of Kentucky
Phil Murphy – Governor of New Jersey
J.B. Pritzker – Governor of Illinois
Stacey Abrams – currently running for Governor of Georgia
Jon Stewart – Comedian
Mitch Landrieu – former Mayor of New Orleans (now working to implement infrastructure bill)
(There are folks who believe that one or more folks will challenge Biden if he decides to run.)

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Women Will Get It Done

Liz Shuler is the first woman president of the AFL-CIO. Shuler ran the organization from the time of the death of former president Richard Trumka.

Shuler will be the leader of 57 U.S. and international labor unions representing 12 million workers. [AXIOS AM 6/12/22]

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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?

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The Road Taken: A memoir
By Senator Patrick Leahy
Released August 23/Available for pre-order

An historic, sweeping memoir from United States Senator Patrick Leahy, currently the chamber's longest-serving senator and President Pro Tempore.

In his landmark memoir *The Road Taken*, Patrick Leahy looks back on a life lived on the front lines of American politics. As the senior-most member and de facto dean of the chamber, Senator Leahy has been a key author of the American story. Leahy established himself as a moral leader and liberal pioneer over four decades spanning nine presidential administrations.

American history comes alive in this gripping story of a master political leader and consummate legislator. Leahy takes you inside the room as pivotal moments in our nation's history play out, from the post-Watergate reform era to path breaking Supreme Court confirmations to stress tests like the impeachment of President Clinton, 9/11 and Congress's role in greenlighting a disastrous war in Iraq, the January 6th Capitol insurrection, and both impeachment trials of Donald Trump—one of which Senator Leahy presided over, a historic first.

Beautifully written and filled with wonderful stories, Leahy's memoir is populated by a larger-than-life cast of characters. We meet the major players who would shape the course of American politics, including every President from Ford onward, a fresh-faced Ted Kennedy, a dying Hubert Humphrey, a thirty-three-year-old son of Scranton named Joe Biden, a quick-witted Barry Goldwater, a freshman Senator and trash-talking gym-mate named Barack Obama, and a

scrappy newcomer by the name of Bernie Sanders. Through these characters and many more, we see the rise, gradual decline, and push for redemption of a United States Senate that Leahy learns at an early age can be the “nation’s conscience.”

The Road Taken is also a moving personal portrait. Born in Vermont in 1940, Leahy got his first taste of politics at age six after riding his tricycle into the Governor’s office. Twenty-eight years later he became the first Democrat and youngest person ever elected to the United States Senate from Vermont. He writes movingly of his wife of nearly sixty years, Marcelle, his family life, his beloved home state of Vermont, and his unexpected life as an actor with cameos in five Batman movies. Despite being born legally blind in one eye, Leahy became an accomplished photographer, shooting history as he witnessed it. His intimate portraits illustrate the book, showcasing history through the lens of his life.

Full of wisdom and insight, *The Road Taken* ranks among the greatest political memoirs, revealing a momentous life marked by hard decisions made without regret.

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Trump, Biden and the
Battle for America’s Future
By Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns

The shocking, definitive account of the 2020 election and the first year of the Biden presidency by two *New York Times* reporters, exposing the deep fissures within both parties as the country approaches a political breaking point.

This is the authoritative account of an eighteen-month crisis in American democracy that will be seared into the country’s political memory for decades to come. With stunning, in-the-room detail, *New York Times* reporters Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns show how both our political parties confronted a series of national traumas, including the coronavirus pandemic, the January 6 attack on the Capitol, and the political brinksmanship of President Biden’s first year in the White House.

From Donald Trump’s assault on the 2020 election and his ongoing campaign of vengeance against his fellow Republicans, to the behind-the-scenes story of Biden’s selection of Kamala Harris as his running mate and his bitter struggles to unite the Democratic Party, this book exposes the degree to which the two-party system has been strained to the point of disintegration. More than at any time in

recent history, the long-established traditions and institutions of American politics are under siege as a set of aging political leaders struggle to hold together a changing country.

Martin and Burns break news on most every page, drawing on hundreds of interviews and never-before-seen documents and recordings from the highest levels of government. The book asks the vitally important (and disturbing) question: can American democracy, as we know it, ever work again?

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Restaurants

Nina May
1337 11th St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
202-518-3609

This review of Nina May is different than any review that Washington Watch has done in that it is based on two visits to the restaurant that Debbie and I had with different people.

The first visit was with Carol and Martha. The second visit, a couple of weeks later, was with Stan and Max.

The restaurant was opened in November 2019 by Colin McClimans, Executive Chef and Danilo Simic, General Manager. The restaurant is named after the daughters of the owners of the restaurant, Colin's daughter May and Danilo's daughter Nina.

The two owners met when both were working at Equinox. Colin was there as chef de cuisine for over six years. Danilo learned to be an award-winning bartender/mixologist. Colin is from D.C. while Danilo is from Serbia, as was our server Jelena on our first visit. Notably, Jelena is the only female server in the restaurant.

On our first visit to the restaurant, Danilo recognized me as a regular diner at Equinox.

The main door for the restaurant is on a corner of the building. From that entrance to the left you can see several outdoor eating areas. At our first visit we

walked through the entire restaurant to reach several outdoor opportunities. Along the way there is a long and complicated stairway to the second floor which I did not attempt. There is a rooftop patio with a retractable ceiling.

There is a permanent outdoor section where we were seated on both visits. There are other outside areas on the same side of the restaurant, some of which are uncovered and others that are not.

The building wall of the section in which we were sitting was in part, a “green wall” with flowers interspersed.

The seating, which is backed against the building wall, is a bench with a heavy blue cushion. Tables in this section seat from 2 to 16 people.

The table at which we were seated on our first visit can be used by up to 6 people but when we were seated there it was organized for four people. On our second visit we were seated at a table which will hold a maximum of four people.

It is noisy and increasingly so as the area fills up.

There was a long table next to us against the same wall that held 16 people who were there enjoying someone’s birthday.

Service is not fast, but you do not feel you are waiting too long between the delivery of each part of the dinner.

There is a chef’s choice section at \$55 per person and for which there must be a minimum of two people.

It is also possible to order a la carte – with different items from different sections of the menu, including some things from the chef’s choice section.

Each person is given a tag with a QR/code which the diner can photograph with their phone and bring up the menu. Paper menus are available on request.

Our first visit was with Carol and Martha.

Carol, Martha, and Debbie ordered Seasonal Margarita - tequila/agave/
lime/seasonal fruits

I had a non-alcoholic cocktail- 0% Espresso Martini – g-street espresso/cane sugar/orange essence

For dinner, for the table we ordered – Herb Scented Parker House Rolls

Carol and Martha – Chef’s choice – (at least 2 people required)

Butter Poached Northern Neck Asparagus
Crispy Virginia Oysters with Carolina Gold Rice Cakes
Black Pepper and Egg Yolk Rigatoni Carbonara
Black Garlic Glazed Royal Trumpet Mushrooms
Pastrami Beef Brisket
Sticky Toffee Pudding

Debbie – a la carte

Butter Poached Northern Neck Asparagus
Crispy Fried Spring Chicken

Mike – a la carte

Black Pepper and Egg Yolk Rigatoni Carbonara
Grilled Whole Stuffed Rainbow Trout
Arugula Salad
Warm Carrot+Shenandoah Valley Carrot Cake

Our 2nd visit was with Stan and Max.

For the table we ordered –

Herb Scented Parker House Rolls
Chioli Marinated Prawns in Pita
Butter Poached Northern Neck Asparagus

Stan ordered

Autum Olive Farm Pork Schnitzel

Max Ordered

Mid Atlantic Rockfish Fillet

Debbie Ordered

Pistachio Crusted Shenandoah Lamb Loin

Mike ordered

Carrot+Cumin Spaghetti with Carrot Top Pesto...However, what was delivered to me was Grilled Pennsylvania Jerk Chicken.

When this mistake was pointed out to our server, he was properly embarrassed and agreed to replace it with the dish that I had ordered. I told him that it was not necessary. He offered that I would not be charged.

Two desserts were ordered for the group. Vanilla+Lavender Custard with Rhubarb Compote and Moon Valley Farm Carrot Cake.

When our server brought the bill – he said that dessert would be free.

There are two gender neutral restrooms just past the kitchen. They are quite small. There are grey rectangular tiles on the floor and whiteish corrugated tiles to just above waist height. There was a ladder in the corner which appeared to be decorative. There is a square wash basin with black fixtures. A large triangular mirror above the washbasin. There is white ceramic floor-based commode.

* * * * *

Café Riggs
Riggs Hotel
900 F Street NW
Washington DC 20004
202-638-1800

Rita, Bob, Max, Debbie, and I went to Café Riggs in the Riggs Hotel for dinner. Valet parking cost \$20.

The Café Riggs Patio and Garden Terrace offers sheltered al fresco dining in the heart of Downtown Washington, DC. With views of the National Portrait Gallery, the patio is the perfect place to meet friends and family for an outdoor brunch, dinner, or glass of wine while taking in the sights and sounds of Penn Quarter.

Next to the hotel is a sidewalk. On either side of sidewalk there are seating areas with large umbrellas over the side closest to the building and a fully built “temporary structure” on the other side of the sidewalk including heaters in the ceiling. When it is really hot it would likely be quite uncomfortable.

The entire Café, inside and out, has seating for 158. There is space inside the hotel to which an additional 100 seats and tables can be added, bringing total capacity to 268.

Our server, Geovarie, has worked here since the restaurant opened roughly 2 years ago.

We had a “table” composed of three small tables set side by side.

It is quite noisy. The area on the other side of the sidewalk sticks into the street. There are numerous cars, trucks, and motorcycles passing by on a regular basis. While they cannot be seen they can certainly be heard.

There is an endless stream of people walking on the sidewalk dressed in every kind of “costume” that you can imagine from every day going to work clothes to looking like they are going to or from a costume party.

Mike, Rita, and Max had Agnolotti – lobster, sugar snap peas, lemon butter.
Rita added Cucumber and Caviar on crackers while Mike added broccoli salad, and cauliflower
Bob – had Roast Chicken and Debbie chose steak frites
Mike added the Non-alcoholic – Peach fizz

Rita ordered Palet D’OR chocolate, hazelnut

Mike ordered a Chocolate Souffle which comes with Raspberry compote, and vanilla ice cream

The restrooms are located toward the back of the restaurant.

The floor is covered by streams of longitudinally set alternately dark and light tiles.

There are two wall-hanging urinals separated by partial walls open at top and bottom. The urinals are of different heights. There is within the restroom a commode room with a separate lockable door. There are full tall horizontal and vertical commode pipes on the walls. The area includes a diaper changing table which folds into wall. There is a marble table with two oblong circular wash basins with separate wall hanging mirrors.

* * * * *

Cranes
724 9th St NW
Washington DC 20001
202-525-4900

Amy, Peter, Debbie, and I went to Cranes together.

This location was a Ruth's Chris restaurant that was closed in December 2018 as they were starting the remake of the Public Library which is across the alley. The nearest Ruth's Chris restaurant in D.C. is now located at 21st and L streets NW in Alexander Court.

Cranes is a Spanish/Japanese fare restaurant. (Shoto, in WW issue #200, is a Japanese fare restaurant.)

Debbie started with Spanish G&T gin/blueberry/basil/lemon/tonic

Peter and I had mocktails. Amy passed.

Peter had a Green Machine seedlip garden. Lime/cilantro/ginger

I had an Island Time – seedlip/spice/mint/pineapple/pomegranate/lemon

The restaurant offers a 10-course tasting menu for \$118/person. We all decided against that option and instead opted for a la carte.

From the Tapas section of the menu, we selected:

JAMON IBERICO – grated tomato/cocoa bread/extra virgin olive oil
VEGETABLE TEMPURA – romesco/fresno pepper
SHRIMP TEMPURA – lime aioli/togarasi/nori
PATATAS BRAVAS – yuzu kosho ketchup/aioli/poppy seed
DUCK RILLETTE GYOZAS – chive/noisette vinaigrette

From the A La Carte section of the menu:

OCTOPUS – edamame hummus/sesame/quinoa
MUSHROOM RICE – shio kombu/scamorza/bubuarare
UNAGI PAELLA – white ponzu/smoked eel/snap pea/jalapeno allioli

From the Dessert section of the menu:

Debbie and Amy chose,
BROWN BUTTER CHURROS – black sesame chocolate sauce/miso
caramel

Peter chose,
STRACCIATELLA MANGO CHEESECAKE – salted brown butter power/
finger lime/mango sorbet

Mike chose,
CHOCOLATE DE CABRA – goat milk ice cream/milk chocolate cremeaux
Cocoa candied rice puff/soybean power

Our server was Ashley. The service was fine early on but slowed down as the evening wore on and the restaurant became busier.

There is seating for 170 dining room and bar and there is a private dining space which can add 24 seats.

To access the restrooms, you walk up three stairs to another level of the restaurant but there is obviously another way to get there because I saw a person in a wheelchair being directed in another direction.

There are separate gender-specific restrooms.

As you enter the men's restroom, to the right is a copper looking shelf which has inserted in it an oblong white ceramic wash basin with a mirror above. Next to this area is a wall-hanging urinal with a partial wall between that urinal and the wash basin.

Within this larger room, there is a separate room with a white ceramic commode hanging from the wall with various handicap bars on the walls midway up or a single bar going up the wall. And there is also a baby changing table...in the wall there is also a full-length mirror next to the door.

* * * * *

The Warehouse
214 King Street
Alexandria Virginia 22314
703-683-6868

Jill and Susan and Debbie and I had lunch at The Warehouse in Alexandria on a Thursday.

On the street in front of the restaurant there is a very long blue tent top with tables and chairs. There was one table that was in use. It was pretty warm, so Debbie and I decided to go inside while we waited for Jill and Susan to arrive.

A few moments later Jill and Susan arrived. Jill came in and said we needed to go outside because Susan had with her dog with her.

Ash, who turned out to be our server, hearing that part of the conversation said that the dog could come in and so Lily, carried in a cloth bag and joined us. It turns out that a mobile groomer was going to pick Lily up and do whatever it is they do.

Jill, Susan, and Debbie each ordered the Lobster/Crab Salad – Lettuce, Bacon, Shredded Eggs, Fresh Tomato, Crumbled Blue Cheese, Avocado and Creole Mustard Dressing. Each of them made some change in the salad as described in the menu.

I started with the Southern Fried Calamari followed by the Sautéed Jumbo Shrimp and Crabmeat a L’Americaine Sauté with Brandy & Shallot Cream Sauce a Garlic Rice.

It was very loud where we were sitting but it may have been because of the specific location of where we were sitting.

The restaurant seats 130-140 people in a variety of areas. On the main floor there is an area three steps above the rest of the floor. We were seated on this raised level. There is a second floor up a full set of stairs.

I told our server Ash that I needed to go to the restroom. He said I have something for you. He led me half-way back on the main floor and opened a door. There was a fully equipped restroom designed for one person.

As I entered the small room, I asked Ash whether this was the only restroom. He said there was a much larger restroom on the 2nd floor, but this restroom was designed to be used by anyone who is handicapped.

There is a white ceramic floor-based commode with appropriate wall hanging bars. Next to the commode is a white ceramic wall hanging washbasin headed by a mirror. There is a baby changing table inserted in the wall. And a

container from which to pull a paper towel and the container in which to place the used towel. The wall is covered with relatively small white rectangular tiles to a height of four feet up the wall.

Mike

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