



What's News

World-Wide

Russia hit targets in Kyiv on Friday as its forces threatened to escalate attacks on Ukrainian command centers in response to alleged strikes inside Russian territory, with both sides gearing up for a new stage in the ground war in the country's east. **A1, A6**

◆ **The Biden administration** announced lease sales for oil and gas drilling on federal land, but said it would sharply reduce the acreage available for leases and charge higher royalties. **A3**

◆ **Israeli police** and Palestinians clashed around Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, leaving more than 150 people injured while raising the threat of a wider conflict. **A7**

◆ **Juries in Texas** and Colorado this week turned back the Justice Department's efforts to prosecute corporate defendants accused of colluding to restrict workers' pay and mobility. **A3**

◆ **Discontent is deepening** across Shanghai, China's largest and wealthiest city, which is now several weeks into a rigid lockdown aimed at crushing a Covid outbreak. **A8**

◆ **Six U.S. lawmakers met** with Taiwan's leader in a show of support for the island democracy, in a trip that signals more tension between Washington and Beijing. **A7**

Business & Finance

◆ **Twitter adopted** a so-called poison pill, a move to prevent Musk from significantly increasing his stake after he made a \$43 billion unsolicited takeover bid for the social-media company. **A1**

◆ **The IRS is investigating** American Express over a questionable tax break that it pitched to clients, according to people familiar with the matter. **B1**

◆ **Biden will nominate** Michael Barr, a former Treasury Department official, to serve as the Federal Reserve's top banking regulator, the White House said. **A2**

◆ **China's central bank** relaxed a key constraint on bank lending, while keeping benchmark rates unchanged, steps that economists said will do little to spur growth. **A8**

◆ **Rising jet-fuel costs** are threatening to strain airlines' profitability just as resurgent travel demand promised relief from the pandemic's toll. **B3**

◆ **Industries say they are** still grappling with supply-chain fallout after a week of expanded mechanical inspections ordered by Texas Gov. Abbott on transport trucks coming from Mexico. **A3**

◆ **The maker of Steinway** pianos is planning to go public on the NYSE. **B3**

NOONAN

America's Most Tumultuous Holy Week **A13**

CONTENTS

Opinion.....	A11-13
Books.....	C7-12
Sports.....	A14
Business News.....	B3
Style & Fashion.....	D2-3
Travel.....	D4-5
Food.....	D11-12
U.S. News.....	A2-5
Weather.....	A4
World News.....	A6-8
Obituaries.....	A9

Good Friday Is Commemorated at Damaged Notre Dame



SHOW OF FAITH: Good Friday was marked by prayers at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris on the third anniversary of a fire that nearly destroyed the historic place of worship. The cathedral has been closed for restoration since the blaze.

Russians Strike Missile Plant Near Kyiv, Press on Mariupol

By BRETT FORREST AND MATTHEW LUXMOORE

Russia hit targets in Kyiv on Friday as its forces threatened to escalate attacks on Ukrainian command centers in response to alleged strikes inside Russian territory, with both sides gearing up for a new stage in the ground war in the country's east.

As Moscow stepped up pressure on Ukraine's capital,

the fate of Mariupol in the country's southeast hung in the balance, with Russian forces pressing their campaign to take control of the strategic port city that serves as a potential link between Russia's mainland and the Crimean Peninsula it seized from Ukraine in 2014.

The latest Russian strikes on the Kyiv area come as Russian and Ukrainian forces girded themselves for what of-

ficials and military analysts say will be a new stage of the ground war in the Donbas region in the east of Ukraine, after Moscow's initial attempt to take Kyiv failed. The area is home to two Russian-backed regions that broke away from Ukrainian government control in 2014, the same year Moscow annexed Crimea.

Russia's Ministry of Defense said it struck a factory near Kyiv that produces long- and

medium-range missiles as well as antiship missiles. The strike came a day after Ukraine said it hit the Moskva, the flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, with a cruise-missile attack.

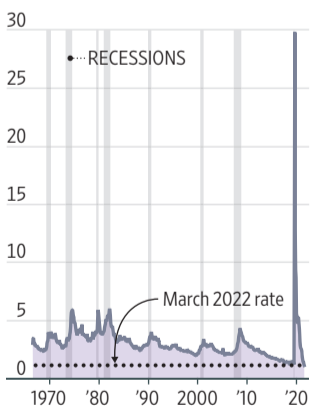
A senior U.S. defense official said Friday that the ship *Please turn to page A6*

- ◆ Port city of Mykolaiv holds off Russian forces..... **A6**
- ◆ Negative views of U.S. rise in Russia, poll finds..... **A6**

Layoffs Wane In Jobs Boom

Jobless claims trend at their lowest levels since 1968. **A2**

Average weekly claims by month per one thousand members of the labor force



Note: Seasonally adjusted. Source: Labor Department via St. Louis Federal Reserve

A Dad Hunts for His Lost Boy in Kabul

An 8-year-old was separated from his family and left behind in Afghanistan during an escape from the Taliban takeover

By JESSICA DONATI

ABU DHABI—On their last night together, James, 8 years old, slept in a car outside the Kabul airport with his father, mother and baby brother.

In the morning, the family joined an anxious, clamoring crowd massed at the airport gate. It was late August, and the last flights were ferrying escapees from the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Two days earlier, a suicide bomber had killed some 170 Afghans and 13 U.S. troops at the airport.

Mohammad, a 56-year-old American, carried James's baby brother, who was just days old. His wife, Bibi, still weak and in pain from her delivery, held James's hand. As the gate opened, the crowd drove forward in a mad dash. Gunfire sounded. Mohammad made it

through. Bibi struggled to keep up, lost hold of her little boy's hand, and James was swept away in the swarm of bodies.

Inside the airport gate, Mohammad turned back to look for his wife.

"I lost James," she said.

They screamed his name but couldn't see their son in the crowd. Mohammad asked the American soldiers stationed there if he could go back out to look. They said he wouldn't be allowed back through the gate.

"I worked with you people," pleaded Mohammad, who trained as a psychologist. For years he had been an adviser to Marines in Afghanistan and wanted to return to California.

This is when Mohammad faced an impossible decision. His wife was re- *Please turn to page A10*



James, his face hidden for safety, lived a comfortable life in Kabul with his family.

Just in Time for Easter, Bunnies Are Multiplying

Abundance of escaped rabbits keeps volunteers and local officials hopping

By CAMERON MCWHIRTER

Zoraida Barreto looked out of the back window of her home near Orlando early this year and noticed a colorful rabbit nibbling around her storage shed. Within weeks, she spotted three, then 12, then 15. Then more than 30.

"Oh my gosh, we stopped counting," says the 69-year-

old retiree, who has lived in the quiet community of Azalea Park for decades. "It was a whole army."

Sales of pet rabbits jumped during Covid. Now it seems so are the number of pet-rabbit escapes.

The rabbits—who are multiplying like, well, themselves—are showing up in backyards and gardens across *Please turn to page A5*



On the run

EXCHANGE



SILICON RALLY
How Apple revived its computer business by designing its own sophisticated chips.

B1

Disney Is Whipsawed Over Stance in Florida

By ROBBIE WHELAN AND ARIAN CAMPO-FLORES

When Walt Disney Co. Chief Executive Bob Chapek explained his decision to stay silent on Florida's Parental Rights in Education bill, known by opponents as the "Don't Say Gay" legislation, he told employees in a March letter that he didn't want Disney to become a "political football."

More than a month later, that's exactly what Disney has become, nowhere more than in the Sunshine State.

Some Republican lawmakers in Florida are threatening to end a special tax district that

has allowed the company to effectively govern the land on which Walt Disney World sits for decades. Members of Congress have called for Disney to be stripped of its original Mickey Mouse copyright.

Since Disney said that it would fight for repeal of the Florida law, politicians have been campaigning for re-election on promises to stand up to Disney and other "woke corporations" that they say are promoting messages and taking stands that put them out of step with Florida parents and voters. Fans and park workers opposed to Disney's stance pro- *Please turn to page A4*



U.S. NEWS

Biden's Fed Nominee Faces Senate Test

Michael Barr was an architect of the 2010 Dodd-Frank regulatory overhaul and the CFPB

BY ANDREW RESTUCCIA
AND ANDREW DUEHREN

WASHINGTON—President Biden will nominate Michael Barr, a former Treasury Department official, to serve as the Federal Reserve's top banking regulator, the White House said, after Mr. Biden's first pick for the job withdrew in the face of opposition from Republicans and a key Democratic senator.

If confirmed, Mr. Barr would serve as the Fed's vice chairman for supervision, charged with overseeing the largest U.S. financial firms including JPMorgan Chase & Co., Bank of America Corp. and Citigroup Inc. A key architect of the 2010 Dodd-Frank post-crisis financial regulatory overhaul and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Mr. Barr would likely bring close scrutiny to bank mergers and rules for lending in low-income neighborhoods.

First, though, Mr. Barr would need to win confirmation in the 50-50 Senate, where many Republicans are expected to line up against

him. If all GOP senators oppose him, he would need to win the support of every Senate Democrat, including centrists and progressives, a task that has proved challenging for some of Mr. Biden's previous nominees to top financial regulatory posts.

Mr. Biden's first pick for the top Fed banking job, Sarah Bloom Raskin, withdrew her nomination after pivotal centrist Sen. Joe Manchin (D., W.Va.) opposed her because of her views on climate change. Unlike Ms. Raskin, Mr. Barr hasn't called on the Fed to take an active role in addressing climate change, a difference that some observers think will help him win the support of centrists.

Mr. Barr has faced skepticism among some progressives, who have said that Obama-era efforts to protect homeowners from foreclosure didn't go far enough. Amid that criticism, the White House passed over Mr. Barr for another top regulatory job, Comptroller of the Currency, and ultimately selected a different nominee, Saule Omarova, a Cornell University law professor. Ms. Omarova withdrew after several centrist Democrats challenged her views on bank oversight and addressing climate change.

After Ms. Raskin's and Ms.



Michael Barr has been tapped to be the Fed's top banking regulator.

Omarova's withdrawals, some banking experts see Mr. Barr's nomination as a White House tack toward the center.

"Certainly the political winds have shifted," said Jesse Van Tol, the president of the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, who supports Mr. Barr's nomination. "There's a sense that perhaps there was an overreach in terms of what was possible. I mean, after all,

the political calculus is 50 votes in the Senate."

Mr. Biden said in a statement that Mr. Barr "has strong support from across the political spectrum." The president said Mr. Barr "understands that this job is not a partisan one, but one that plays a critical role in regulating our nation's financial institutions to ensure Americans are treated fairly and to protect the stabil-

ity of our economy."

Sen. Pat Toomey (R., Pa.), the top Republican on the Senate Banking Committee, said he had concerns about Mr. Barr, adding that he looked forward to considering his nomination.

"Michael Barr has defended Dodd-Frank's big-bank bailout mechanism, which enshrined into law taxpayer bailouts of banks. He was also the primary author of the unconstitutional and unaccountable CFPB," he said. The Supreme Court ordered changes to the bureau's structure in 2020 after finding its director held too much power.

Mr. Barr, currently the dean of the University of Michigan's public policy school, didn't respond to requests for comment.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D., Mass.), a top progressive on the Senate Banking Committee, said she intended to support Mr. Barr's nomination, as did Sen. Sherrod Brown (D., Ohio.), the chairman of the panel. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D., Ore.), a progressive who helped craft the Dodd-Frank Act, however, said in a statement that he was undecided.

"I'm not going to make up my mind about this nomination until I have a chance to sit down with Mr. Barr," Mr. Merkley said.

The absence of a Senate-confirmed leader at any of the top roles at the Fed, OCC or Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has worried advocates for tighter regulation. They fear that Democrats are losing an opportunity to put their imprint on key questions like how to address the risks presented by climate change.

If confirmed, Mr. Barr would face the question of whether and how to reverse regulatory changes made during the Trump administration, when the central bank eased the financial rulebook for Wall Street, lowering capital and other cash-management requirements for U.S. lenders with less than \$700 billion in assets, for example.

Analysts said Mr. Barr would review the Trump-era rules, but not necessarily reverse all of them.

"The idea that Michael Barr is going to be a bogeyman for industry, I have not seen evidence of," said Paul Thornell, a lobbyist at Mehler Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas whose clients include financial-services firms. He said Mr. Barr "could have very easily put in motion colossal changes to the largest financial institutions that would have wound them down, nationalized them, taken over assets, and that is not the product that came out of Dodd-Frank."

Job Security Grows in Tight Market

BY DAVID HARRISON

New claims for unemployment benefits are trending at their lowest levels since 1968, a sign of how few layoffs are happening in the tightest labor market in half a century.

Job security today, by some measures, is even better than it was in the economic halcyon days of the late 1960s.

Behind today's extremely tight labor market is a transformed U.S. economy, not least because its labor force is much bigger, including more women and more jobs in the service sector. The total number of people either working or looking for work is now 164 million, more than twice what it was in 1968.

That means the layoffs-per-worker rate is significantly lower today than even the 1960s. In March, there were about 1.1 jobless claims per 1,000 people in the labor force—roughly half the 2.3 jobless claims per 1,000 recorded in 1968, according to an analysis of Labor Department data.

"Right now, Americans are experiencing the highest level of job security on record by many measures," said Aaron Sojourner, an economist at the University of Minnesota.

Initial jobless claims rose modestly last week, but in the



People registered for a jobs fair in Stockton, Calif., on Thursday.

three preceding weeks new unemployment filings came in at the lowest levels since November 1968.

While jobless claims and the unemployment rate—3.6% last month and 3.4% in November 1968—are nearly the same, the labor market has little else in common with the late 1960s. Women make up almost 47% of the workforce in 2022 up from about 37% in November 1968. The influx of women into the workplace has supported labor-force growth over the past five decades.

Workers are now more likely to be employed in private-sector services, which in 2021 accounted for 71% of the work-

force, than in manufacturing or in the public sector. Roughly 10% of today's workers are members of unions, down from around 28% in 1968, according to research by economists Barry Hirsch, David MacPherson and Wayne Vroman.

Manufacturing firms frequently lay off workers for short periods to adjust production levels. Conversely, service-sector jobs tend to follow broader economic trends.

Other indicators also point to a tighter labor market now than in the late 1960s.

The share of workers who quit their jobs and the share of job openings as a function of the labor force have also re-

corded record highs in recent months. That has made it harder for employers to operate at full staff. Quits and openings data extend only to 2001.

In the past, "companies tended to have more caution on the side of hiring than on the side of layoffs," said Erica Groshen, a former commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. "I think right now they have a more balanced caution. The balance has tilted a little bit to paying attention to the risks of laying people off."

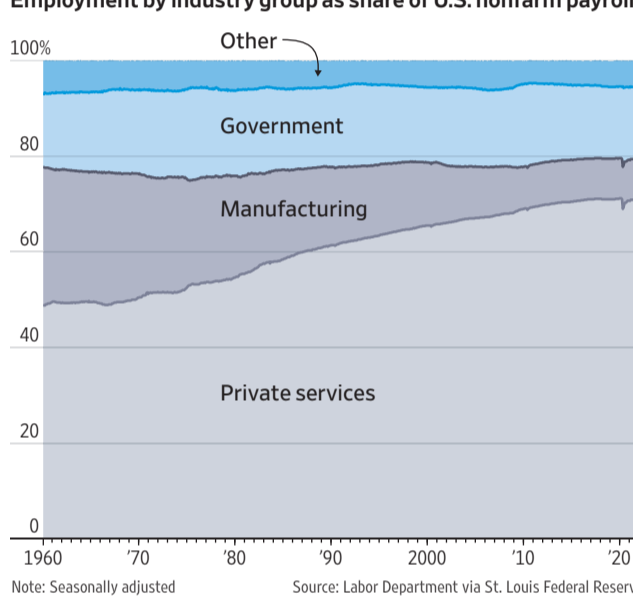
Wages, adjusted for inflation, are also better in 2022.

Nonsupervisory workers earned an average of \$27.06 an hour in March, according to the Labor Department. That compares with \$25.19 an hour, when adjusting for inflation, that similar workers earned in November 1968.

However, productivity improvements mean that workers today produce much more output per hour worked than they did in the past. Workers haven't fully benefited from those changes. The share of the national income that goes to wages has fallen 7.3% since the fourth quarter of 1968.

The tight labor market in the late 1960s came near the end of a nearly decadelong economic expansion. The current labor market developed

Employment by industry group as share of U.S. nonfarm payroll



Note: Seasonally adjusted

Source: Labor Department via St. Louis Federal Reserve

just two years after an extremely deep recession.

Caroline Fohlin, an economic historian at Emory University, said the pandemic-induced shock is more similar to a war than a financial crisis.

Wartime economic shocks tend to sharply reduce the supply of workers and available goods, she said, since so many people and resources are devoted to the war effort. Between 1914 and 1918, during World War I, the unemployment rate fell to 1.4% from 7.9%, according to research by Hugh Rockoff, an economist at Rutgers University.

In this case, it wasn't war that kept workers out of the

labor force but disease or fear of infections, Ms. Fohlin said.

"Most of our recessions have some kind of financial element but some of them, less often, are like this—more like a war shock," she said.

Still, it can be misleading to compare unemployment claims numbers between 1968 and today, said Ms. Groshen. That is partly because workers today are less likely to claim unemployment benefits when they lose their jobs than in the past. In some cases, people now turn to informal working arrangements or gig work when they lose a job, rather than file for unemployment benefits, she said.

Twitter Moves to Stop Musk

Continued from Page One

ported Thursday that Twitter was weighing installing a poison pill.

Mr. Musk might not be the only suitor for the company, as people familiar with the matter say that Thoma Bravo LP and other private-equity firms are now circling too. But just because they are running the numbers doesn't mean any of the firms will make a formal bid or that such a deal would come together.

Taking Twitter private would be no small feat; private-equity firms have explored and decided against it in the past. It would rank as one of the largest leveraged buyouts of all time, and Twitter doesn't have the attributes of a typical LBO target, like strong, stable cash flow. It is possible the buyout firms are eyeing something short of a full takeover, too.

The New York Post earlier reported on Thoma Bravo's interest in Twitter.

The private-equity firm, which specializes in the technology sector and manages roughly \$100 billion, has been busy lately at a time of heightened buyout activity. It agreed

to buy Anaplan Inc. for \$10.7 billion in March and SailPoint Technologies Inc. just days ago for \$6.1 billion.

Mr. Musk, the billionaire founder of Tesla and privately held rocket company SpaceX, offered to pay \$54.20 a share for Twitter and said that was his "best and final" bid. He has been criticizing how Twitter moderates content, among other things, and briefly agreed this month to join its board before backing out.

His takeover offer has prompted speculation that a white-knight bidder such as another technology company or private-equity firm could surface as an alternative to a deal with the unpredictable and outspoken entrepreneur.

One possible outcome is that Twitter rejects Mr. Musk's offer as too low but leaves the door open for him to return with a higher one, some of the people said. Mr. Musk said that if the offer isn't accepted, he would reconsider his position as a shareholder. He also has said he has a Plan B, without detailing it.

One big question mark is how Mr. Musk would fund any deal. Though he is the world's richest person, much of his wealth is tied up in Tesla shares, and his offer didn't have details on financing plans, which, like other aspects of the bid, is unusual.

The Journal reported Thursday that Morgan Stanley would provide some debt financing for the bid and that

Mr. Musk has received approaches from investors interested in backing it.

"There are a plethora of multibillionaires eager to fund Elon for whatever he wants to do," said Joe Lonsdale, an Austin, Texas, venture capitalist and co-founder of Palantir Technologies Inc.

One big name who doesn't plan to put in money is Peter Thiel, a longtime associate of Mr. Musk's dating to their days as executives at PayPal Holdings Inc. While Mr. Thiel, a fellow billionaire who has invested in several of Mr. Musk's

The company said the poison pill does not prevent it from considering bids.

companies, has expressed to friends broad support for Mr. Musk's anything-goes vision for Twitter, he doesn't plan to back any bid, according to people familiar with his plans.

Existing Twitter shareholders supportive of Mr. Musk could also roll over their holdings into any deal.

Investors in a sign that Twitter's investors overall appear less-than-enthusiastic over Mr. Musk's bid, the company's shares closed down nearly 2% Thursday at \$45.08. The market was closed Friday.

Mr. Musk has long criti-

cized how the social-media platform is run and says that by taking it private as a bastion for free speech, he would remove the persistent pressure on the company from advertisers and shareholders about content that is potentially offensive to some users or could be deemed abusive.

"Twitter needs to be transformed as a private company," Mr. Musk said in a federal filing Thursday.

Over the past two weeks, Mr. Musk has argued in a blizzard of tweets and again Thursday in his securities filing that censorship—not abuse—is the company's core problem.

Among his ideas for how to improve Twitter, Mr. Musk said, is that the social network's algorithm should be open-sourced, meaning that its code could be available for study by outsiders. He also said any efforts to amplify or limit the reach of users' tweets should be publicly documented.

"That action should be made apparent so anyone can see that action has been taken so there's no sort of behind the scenes manipulation, either algorithmically or manually," Mr. Musk said.

And Mr. Musk made clear he doesn't think anything goes is the best approach either: He said he would like to crack down on scams and spam posts that populate his Twitter feed.

—Rob Copeland and Laura Cooper contributed to this article.

CORRECTIONS & AMPLIFICATIONS

Communists took control in Russia in 1917. The "Back in Business" column in the April 9 Exchange section incorrectly said 1918.

The CNN app has been downloaded about 100,000 times since CNN+ was launched in late March, according to a senior Warner Bros. Discovery Inc. executive. In some editions Friday, a Business & Finance article about Warner Bros. Discovery incorrectly said the downloads were for CNN+, which doesn't have its own app.

The Business & Finance section's tables of insider-trading buying-and-selling data by sector for the weeks ended Feb. 4 through April 1 were incomplete, omitting data for the sectors of capital goods, consumer nondurables and public utilities in tables published Feb. 7 through April 4. Also, data provider Refinitiv has ceased gathering data for the business services, industrial and media sectors. Those categories incorrectly appeared in the tables from Feb. 7 through April 4.

Readers can alert The Wall Street Journal to any errors in news articles by emailing wsjcontact@wsj.com or by calling 888-410-2667.

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U.S. NEWS

DOJ Loses In Trials Of Alleged Collusion

BY DAVE MICHAELS

Juries in Texas and Colorado this week turned back the Justice Department's efforts to prosecute corporate defendants accused of colluding to restrict workers' pay and mobility, dealing a blow to efforts to punish practices that it says harm workers.

Dialysis provider **DaVita Inc.** and its former chief executive officer, Kent Thiry, were acquitted Friday in Denver on three counts of conspiring with other companies to not recruit each other's senior-level employees. Separately on Thursday, a Texas jury acquitted the former owner and clinical director of a home-health staffing company of conspiring with rivals to reduce their contractors' pay.

The two prosecutions marked the first ever federal criminal cases focused on alleged labor-market collusion. The antitrust division has pursued civil cases in recent years against companies that entered into agreements to not raid each other's workers, but charging the conduct as a crime marked a major escalation of the government's approach.

DaVita and another health-care firm, **Surgical Care Affiliates LLC**, had agreed to refrain from hiring each other's senior employees unless the current employer was aware of the possibility, according to prosecutors. DaVita and Mr. Thiry were charged in July 2021. Surgical Care Affiliates LLC was indicted in January in Dallas federal court and similarly charged with conducting illegal no-poach agreements. That trial is scheduled for January 2023.

The two criminal cases focused on alleged misconduct in the labor market.

DaVita and Mr. Thiry had argued that prosecutors were overreaching by declaring nonsolicitation agreements to be illegal. Courts hadn't found that such deals were inherently anticompetitive, the company said. DaVita and Mr. Thiry were acquitted after an eight-day trial and two days of jury deliberations.

"We appreciate the jury's decision and are grateful to put this matter behind us," DaVita said. "We remain committed to operating with integrity and upholding the highest standards of law."

When businesses agree not to recruit or hire each other's workers, it robs employees of opportunities, information and the ability to use competing offers to negotiate better terms, the Justice Department has argued.

President Biden last year ordered the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission, which share antitrust enforcement authority, to better protect workers from wage fixing and other actions that can restrict labor-market competition.

In the Texas case, Neeraj Jindal and John Rodgers had been accused of trying to recruit at least five competitors to lower pay for physical-therapy assistants working in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Jurors acquitted Messrs. Jindal and Rodgers of conspiring to fix prices after a nine-day trial. The men were also acquitted of a second conspiracy charge related to allegations that they impeded a federal investigation of their conduct.

However, Mr. Jindal was convicted of obstructing that probe, which was initially done by the FTC, while Mr. Rodgers, the clinical director, was acquitted.

Paul Coggins, a lawyer for Messrs. Jindal and Rodgers, said he was disappointed that Mr. Jindal had been convicted on the obstruction charge but pleased that jurors had "caught on about the antitrust counts."

A Justice Department spokesman didn't respond to a request for comment. The FTC said it was pleased the jury found that Mr. Jindal schemed to thwart its investigation.

U.S. Resumes Oil Leases, Raises Fees

BY KATY STECH FERREK AND TIMOTHY PUKE

WASHINGTON—The Biden administration announced lease sales for oil and gas drilling on federal land Friday, but said it would sharply reduce the acreage available for leases and charge higher royalties on the oil and gas produced.

The Interior Department said it would make roughly 144,000 acres available for oil and gas drilling through a series of lease sales, an 80% reduction from the footprint of land that had been under evaluation for leasing.

Companies also will be required to pay royalties of 18.75% of the value of what they extract, up from 12.5%. Royalties for onshore oil and gas drilling generated about \$1.5 billion to \$3 billion a year for the U.S. Treasury during the last decade, according to the Congressional Research Service.

The announcement comes after weeks of pressure on the Biden administration to take action to address historically high energy prices driven by the economic rebound from Covid-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

As a candidate, President

Biden called for ending oil and gas drilling on federal lands as a way to cut greenhouse-gas emissions that contribute to global warming. He ordered a moratorium on new leases on the day he took office.

That moratorium was put on hold by a federal district court judge in Louisiana on June 15, after 13 states with significant oil and gas drilling sued to block it—saying Congress requires the development of abundant energy resources on public lands.

The states also argued that they would lose money and jobs if the moratorium remained in place while the lawsuit unfolded.

The suit challenged the president's authority to issue the moratorium under federal law, and it wasn't clear Friday whether the plaintiffs would continue with the lawsuit, which had oral arguments scheduled for next month.

Resuming oil and gas leases has been at the top of the industry's wishlist for action in Washington to help reinvigorate U.S. oil production. But Friday's decision is unlikely to deliver quick relief, since even after a lease has been granted it can take months or years to



Oil and gas companies will be required to pay royalties of 18.75% of the value of what they extract, up from 12.5%.

CEDAR ATAMASIO/ASSOCIATED PRESS

tap the oil in a way that can meaningfully add to supply.

C. Jeffrey Eshelman, chief operating officer at the Independent Petroleum Association of America, a trade group, took issue with the timing of the release late in the afternoon on Good Friday and Passover.

"This administration has begged for more oil from foreign nations, blames American energy producers for price gouging and sitting on leases," Mr. Eshelman said. "Now, on a late holiday announcement, under pressure, it announces a lease sale with major royalty

increases that will add uncertainty to drilling plans for years."

The American Exploration and Production Council, which represents independent producers, noted that the Obama administration had held dozens of lease sales by this point in its tenure.

"While today's announcement is a step in the right direction, to really unleash American energy the Biden administration should continue to hold ongoing lease sales pursuant to the Mineral Leasing Act, issue permits more expedi-

Texas-Mexico Bridge Jams Slow Shipments

BY ELIZABETH FINDELL

PHARR, Texas—Industries say they are still grappling with supply-chain fallout after a week of expanded mechanical inspections ordered by Texas Gov. Greg Abbott on transport trucks crossing from Mexico into Texas.

Mr. Abbott, a Republican, has dialed back the inspections in recent days, announcing Friday that he would allow the final international bridges in the state to return to normal operations, just over a week after his new policy began.

"The bridges...will return to normal, beginning immediately," Mr. Abbott said.

The searches and resulting protests spurred dayslong shipment delays and slowed the typically brisk trade of goods between Mexico and Texas, which accounts for some \$440 billion annually.

At the Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge, which crosses nearly a third of all fresh produce trucked into the U.S. from Mexico, 18-wheelers filtered out slowly Thursday and Friday from an inspection lot where state troopers and mechanics lifted hoods to check their engines and slid underneath them. The inspections, which took about an hour per truck, left truckers waiting more than 36 hours to cross and spurred a protest blockade in Mexico that closed the bridge completely for nearly three days.



Commercial trucks waited to cross the Pharr-Reynosa International Bridge on Wednesday.

MICHAEL GONZALEZ/GETTY IMAGES

The disrupted week affected at least \$180 million in fresh fruit and vegetables, according to the Texas International Produce Association, and eliminated some \$20 million in Texas produce-related economic production. The association doesn't yet have an estimate for its complete losses.

"We don't know what the condition of the produce is that is stuck in those trailers," said Dante Galeazzi, president of the association. "I have to assume that a lot of this fresh produce that's been stuck in those trucks for several days

is going to come across and it'll be worth nothing or pennies on the dollar."

Mr. Galeazzi and others who work in the trucking industry estimated that it will take at least a week to normalize the supply chain, possibly longer, as the disruptions have occurred over a holiday week.

Mr. Abbott, who has increasingly sought to exert state control over border security, initially framed the mechanical inspections of commercial trucks as a border security issue, saying cartels often use unsafe vehicles to

smuggle people and drugs into the country. As of Thursday, the Texas Department of Public Safety had checked 6,096 commercial vehicles and turned back 1,423 for issues with headlights, taillights, brakes or tires. The inspections, which occurred after trucks had already passed through federal customs, didn't find any drugs or immigrants, according to the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Mr. Abbott began rolling back the inspection orders at Texas bridges in recent days as he reached agreements with

governors of four neighboring Mexican states. The agreements contain few specifics, but generally say the states will work cooperatively to ensure that trucks meet mechanical safety standards and to reduce illegal border traffic.

The final agreement was approved Friday afternoon with the state of Tamaulipas, which shares the most international bridges with Texas, including the Pharr bridge, Laredo's World Trade Bridge, which is the country's largest inland port, and five others in the Rio Grande Valley.

Most commercial trucks crossing the border do so for only a short time and distance. Mexican truckers may haul two to four loads a day over international bridges to Texas border region warehouses or cold storage facilities, where the products are later picked up by American truckers and transported nationwide. As they are paid per load, dayslong delays made it impossible for them to earn a living, truckers protesting in Mexico said.

As the Texas state inspections blocked up traffic on some major points of entry, trucks sought to pass through smaller ones. In the Rio Grande Valley, bridges in Progreso, Rio Grande City and Roma, each with just one or two lanes for commercial traffic, extended their hours to deal with traffic trying to avoid the larger bridges.

Respiratory Virus Is Targeted

BY PETER LOFTUS

After Covid-19, vaccine makers' next big target is a respiratory virus that kills up to 500 children a year nationwide and has been among the leading causes of U.S. hospitalizations for decades.

The respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, infects nearly everyone at some point, causing mild, cold-like symptoms for most people. But it can lead to serious health problems such as difficulty breathing and pneumonia for infants and older adults.

The virus has for decades eluded efforts to develop a vaccine, including a major setback in the 1960s when an experimental shot harmed some children in testing. RSV is one of the last remaining childhood diseases without an approved vaccine.

Now several drugmakers including **Pfizer Inc.**, **Johnson & Johnson**, **Moderna Inc.** and **GlaxoSmithKline PLC** are testing shots that infectious-disease specialists say show promise at safely preventing RSV disease. Initial development of most of these vaccines predated the current pandemic, but the rapid success in finding effective Covid-19 vaccines has energized the RSV effort, according to analysts.

If large studies under way in tens of thousands of subjects validate safety and effectiveness, Pfizer, J&J and

GlaxoSmithKline say they plan to file for regulatory approval later this year. That could lead to one or more of the shots becoming available next year, according to the companies and analysts.

The shots could be given to older adults or to pregnant women to protect their newborns from RSV in the first few months of life. **Sanofi SA** and **AstraZeneca PLC** are developing an antibody-based drug that could be given directly to new-

Rapid development of Covid-19 vaccine energizes research on deadly RSV.

borns to prevent RSV disease.

"The impact would be huge," said Dr. Janet Englund, a respiratory-virus specialist at Seattle Children's Hospital who has focused on RSV research. "It would change hospitalization rates. Young babies wouldn't have to come to the hospital so much."

RSV vaccines could be a significant new source of revenue for drugmakers. SVB Leerink analysts have estimated that the RSV vaccine market could reach at least \$10 billion in global revenue. Pfizer this month agreed to acquire **ReViral Ltd.**, which is developing

treatments for RSV.

Each year RSV infections result in about 58,000 hospitalizations of children under 5 years old and 177,000 hospitalizations of adults 65 and older, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. While most children survive, RSV kills up to 500 children in the U.S. each year and about 14,000 older adults each year—a toll that approaches that of influenza.

In the elderly, "if a person has chronic lung disease or if they've had a heart attack or some underlying condition, they are at increased risk of dying from an RSV infection," said H. Cody Meissner, chief of the division of pediatric infectious disease at Tufts University School of Medicine.

As with the flu, RSV season typically runs from late fall to spring. The Covid-19 pandemic disrupted that pattern, as distancing and masking suppressed RSV in the normal 2020-21 season. But cases jumped last summer as people took fewer precautions.

In the absence of a vaccine, certain infants at high risk of serious RSV disease, such as premature babies, have been given a preventive drug called Synagis since the late 1990s. While it has been shown to reduce the risk of RSV-related hospitalizations, doctors say it is expensive and must be administered frequently during RSV season.

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U.S. NEWS

Citadel Chief Griffin Rises As GOP Donor

Hedge-fund billionaire pours \$40 million into midterms, urges more corporate involvement

By JOHN MCCORMICK

CHICAGO—Hedge-fund billionaire Ken Griffin is raising his total investment in this year's midterm congressional elections to roughly \$40 million and calling on American business leaders to become more involved in politics.

Day to day, the Citadel founder is either the first- or second-biggest individual donor to outside spending groups on the Republican side for federal races this election cycle, according to rankings by the non-partisan OpenSecrets watchdog group, making him a top force behind the GOP's drive to retake Congress in November.

Mr. Griffin gave \$18.25 million to five groups promoting conservative candidates, aides to Mr. Griffin told The Wall Street Journal, ahead of the Friday deadline for committees to file first-quarter disclosure reports to the Federal Election Commission. His single biggest gift was \$7.5 million to the Congressional Leadership Fund, the super political-action committee associated with House Republicans.

In an interview in his corporate headquarters overlooking Lake Michigan and Chicago's skyline, Mr. Griffin said more U.S. business leaders need to become involved in politics, even if it risks alienating customers, employees or shareholders at a time of deep

division.

"Too many of America's business leaders stay out of politics today," he said. "They have to be engaged because they understand the ramifications of policy decisions: I'm building a business; I'm running a factory; I'm creating jobs. They just can't continue to be silent."

Asked about the risks of angering half of a company's customers, Mr. Griffin, whose firm has less of a retail presence than many, responded by calling for bipartisanship.

"Pick people from both sides who represent the values that we need as a nation to move forward," he said. "Some of the most senior partners at Citadel are big supporters of Democrats, and they support people who I think have an important voice in the dialogue in America. The debate between our two parties is where we will find the right common ground."

Mr. Griffin called on Republicans to move past questioning the results of the 2020 presidential election, urged both political parties to find younger 2024 presidential nominees and discussed his own potential interest in elected office or a national role like Treasury secretary.

While smaller-dollar, online contributors make up an increasing share of candidate fundraising—especially in presidential races—donors like Mr. Griffin remain central to the funding of outside groups responsible for a large share of political advertising.

His contributions to federal candidates and causes have grown with each two-year



'Too many of America's business leaders stay out of politics today,' says Ken Griffin, the founder and CEO of the hedge fund Citadel.

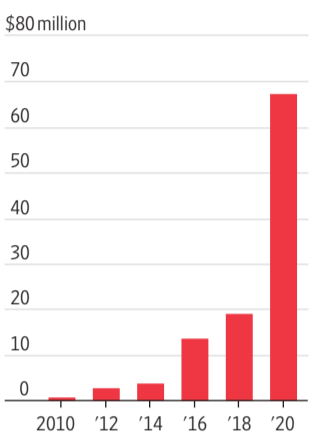
election cycle, from less than \$1 million in 2009-10 to \$67 million in 2019-20, a presidential election cycle, according to OpenSecrets data.

He attributed the growth to a variety of factors, including his belief that cities such as Chicago have lost ground controlling crime and providing an education system that can prepare America's children for global competition.

"Nothing is more important to the future of America than a robust nursery through high school, and then a system of higher education," Mr. Griffin said. "A huge part of my shift towards being more involved in politics has been watching federal and state policies undermine access to the American Dream."

Mr. Griffin said teacher unions have become an "impediment to student outcomes," but he also suggested better pay and the portability of retirement benefits so teachers can more easily move into other professions if they get tired of the classroom.

Some of Ken Griffin's political giving, by two-year election cycle



Note: Includes contributions to federal candidates, parties, political action committees and other groups required to provide disclosure. Source: OpenSecrets.org

ceive faster market prices in his dorm room. At 53 years old, he is on the younger side among top political donors, who are more commonly in their 60s, 70s and 80s.

Congressional candidates, committees and parties are required to file disclosure reports with the Federal Election Commission by Friday night, and those records are certain to contain numerous additional contributions from Mr. Griffin to individual candidates.

Besides his donation to the Congressional Leadership Fund, aides to Mr. Griffin said he gave \$5 million during the quarter to the Senate Leadership Fund, a super PAC affiliated with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R., Ky.).

He sent seven-figure checks to American Patriots PAC and Winning for Women Action Fund, separate groups seeking to elect conservative veterans and women.

Mr. Griffin is investing heavily in the U.S. Senate race in Pennsylvania. He added \$2.5 million to the \$5 million

he had previously given to Honor Pennsylvania, a super PAC backing Republican David McCormick, the former chief executive of hedge-fund giant Bridgewater Associates. Mr. Griffin is at odds with former President Donald Trump, who last weekend threw his support behind celebrity surgeon Mehmet Oz, known as Dr. Oz.

Mr. Griffin said he disagreed with Mr. Trump's continued false allegations of widespread fraud in the 2020 presidential election. "It's time that we move on as a country," he said, adding that he supports greater transparency in the nation's voting systems and a nationwide requirement for voters to present photo identification when voting. "It's really important that we end the rhetoric in America that elections can be rigged."

While most of his campaign contributions have been to Republicans and conservative causes, Mr. Griffin has donated to some Democrats, including more recently to New York Mayor Eric Adams.

Crews Work to Save WWII Ship Taking on Water on Shore of Lake Erie

Crews in Buffalo, N.Y., have been working to save a decommissioned U.S. Navy destroyer used in World War II from sinking.

The USS The Sullivans is one of four vessels that sits in the waters by the Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park, the largest inland naval park, located on the shore of Lake Erie.

The destroyer, which previously had been under repair, was taking on water after the hull was breached on one side on Wednesday evening, according to a statement from the park.

The ship was active in the Pacific during the war, shooting down eight Japanese planes. It was originally named after the five brothers from Waterloo, Iowa, who were killed in action in 1942 aboard the USS Juneau.

—Tatal Ansari



DEREK GEE/THE BUFFALO NEWS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

President, First Lady Release Tax Returns

By LAURA SAUNDERS

President Biden and first lady Jill Biden made \$610,702 in adjusted gross income in 2021, according to tax returns the couple released Friday.

The couple resumed the presidential tradition of voluntarily releasing their tax returns last year after former President Donald Trump had declined to release his returns.

The Bidens filed their tax return jointly and paid \$150,439 in federal income tax, with an effective federal income-tax rate of 24.6%. They also paid \$30,765 in Delaware income tax, and Dr. Biden paid \$2,721 in Virginia income tax.

The Bidens' 2021 income was slightly more than their 2020 income of \$607,336, and nearly three-quarters of it was from salaries.

Mr. Biden earned \$378,333 as president and Jill Biden earned \$67,116 from Northern Virginia Community College. Most of the rest of their income was from pensions and Social Security payments.

Vice President Kamala Harris and her husband, Douglas Emhoff, also released their 2021 tax returns. They reported nearly \$1.7 million in adjusted gross income. They paid \$523,371 in federal income tax, for an effective federal rate of 31.6%.

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Disney Is Whipsawed In Florida

Continued from Page One tested outside the company's headquarters this month, and others have used social media to call for boycotts against Disney's parks and its flagship streaming service, Disney+.

Mr. Chapek and Disney stayed silent on the bill until after the Florida state Senate voted for it on March 8. Soon after the vote, Mr. Chapek moved quickly to reassure angry employees who criticized the company for not taking a stand. Later, the company said the bill "should never have been passed," and vowed to fight other bills like it in other states.

The Florida bill prohibits classroom instruction on gender identity and sexual orientation for schoolchildren through grade three, and limits it for older students to material that is "age appropriate."

President Biden condemned the bill as hateful toward LGBT people, and Disney employees organized walkouts in protest of it. Public-opinion polling on the measure is mixed, but most polls have found that the bill and others like it in other states have the support of about half of voters surveyed.

As Disney enters the second month of fallout from its handling of the bill, now it's politi-

cians and fans, more than employees, who are using the company as a punching bag, underscoring how perilous it can be for a family-oriented entertainment company to take a stand on sensitive social issues.

Disney, one of Florida's largest private-sector employers, with nearly 80,000 workers, declined to comment on criticism from lawmakers. Inside the company, some executives have expressed disappointment that Disney has become politicized, said people familiar with their thinking.

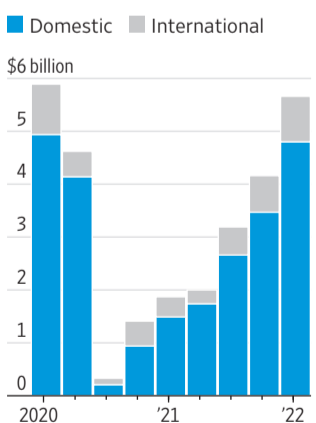
This month, Rep. Jim Banks, a Republican from Indiana, sent a letter to Mr. Chapek saying he opposed extending the original copyright for Mickey Mouse, which is set to expire at the end of 2023. Certain Disney copyrights have been extended repeatedly in the past by acts of Congress.

Two other U.S. House members have since voiced support for Mr. Banks's letter.

A small group of Florida Republicans has resurrected the idea of repealing what is known as the Reedy Creek Improvement District, a 38-square-mile plot of land near Orlando that includes Walt Disney World and was created in 1967 by the state of Florida at the request of Walt Disney himself.

The Reedy Creek district, believed to be one of the largest independent tax districts in the country, is exempt from many state and local environmental rules, building codes and taxes, allowing Walt Disney World to have more control over its development projects.

Walt Disney's Parks and Experiences revenue



Note: Latest fiscal quarter ended Jan. 1. Source: the company

It isn't clear how much the benefits Disney gets from Reedy Creek are worth, but the district collected \$140 million in taxes last year from Disney, according to public filings. Disney saves tens of millions of dollars a year by avoiding paying certain county and state taxes and fees, according to a former executive who studied the issue over a decade ago. A representative of the district declined to comment.

Disney's challenges in the state come after the company reported record income from its theme parks and resorts business in its most recent financial disclosures.

"Disney has wielded an enormous amount of power in this state and has basically been untouchable, but now they are in their weakest position, politically, in more than 50 years," said Spencer Roach, a

Republican state representative from Lee County, on Florida's Gulf Coast.

Mr. Roach, who is seeking re-election in November, in early April called in a tweet for the repeal of the state law that established Reedy Creek.

GOP Gov. Ron DeSantis, who clashed repeatedly with Disney in recent weeks, signaled his support for the effort.

"Disney had held so much sway, they were able to sustain a lot of special treatment over the years," Mr. DeSantis said last month in response to a reporter's question. "And if that stops now, which it should, that'll be a good thing for Florida."

Democratic state Rep. Anna Eskamani, whose district is in the Orlando area, said she considered Republican opposition to Disney an effort to rebuke the company for speaking out, rather than a principled stance against corporate influence.

"My concern is that much of this seems punitive in nature," Ms. Eskamani said. "Disney stood up to say, 'We don't consent to homophobia and transphobia.'"

The prospect of Republican state leaders—who have long presented themselves as pro-business and have benefited from Disney's political contributions—battling one of the state's largest employers is jarring for many. "It's just really quite shocking to see Disney in this situation, coming under attack from Republicans," said Aubrey Jewett, a political-science professor at the University of Central Florida.

U.S. NEWS

Should Earth Ask ET to Call?

By AYLYN WOODWARD

An international group of scientists has updated a message of friendship to alien beings and is proposing to beam it to a ring of stars near the center of our galaxy. On Earth, though, other scientists aren't feeling as welcoming.

The group's goal, described in a paper published in late March in the peer-reviewed journal *Galaxies*, is to introduce humanity to "extraterrestrial intelligences" that might be living on one or more of the many potentially habitable planets believed to lie within the star ring.

The proposed interstellar calling card contains a diagram of a man and a woman with hands raised in greeting, a map of Earth and basic scientific and mathematical concepts—as well as a star map alien beings might use to steer a spacecraft to our corner of the Milky Way and an invitation to beam a message back our way.

Sending the message could benefit humanity by putting us in touch with peaceful aliens whose scientific and technological knowledge surpasses our own, according to Stuart Taylor, an astrophysicist at the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence, or SETI, Institute in Mountain View, Calif., and one of 11 co-authors of the paper.

"ET might be able to help us revive a world we almost destroyed," Dr. Taylor said, though the vast distances involved mean it would take thousands of years for any return message to arrive.

But while the SETI Institute and other organizations have long used radio telescopes to listen for possible messages from aliens, the idea of sending messages has its critics—including those who worry that any aliens we contact might wish us ill.

"I think 99% of astronomers think that this is a bad idea," said Dan Werthimer, chief scientist of the SETI program at



A map of Earth's landmasses as part of a message for potential transmission into space by radio waves.

the University of California, Berkeley, who wasn't involved in the paper.

Along with SpaceX Chief Executive Elon Musk and more than 20 other scientists and entrepreneurs, Dr. Werthimer was a signatory of a 2015 statement condemning the idea of sending such messages. The group said that it was impossible to know whether intelligent extraterrestrials—if

Some experts think sending interstellar messages to aliens is a bad idea.

they do exist—would be benign or hostile.

Stephen Hawking was also a critic of such celestial outreach. In a 2010 interview, the renowned physicist warned that advanced aliens might be "looking to conquer and colonize" whatever planets they can reach.

Jonathan Jiang, an astrophysicist with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the paper's lead author, said there were no im-

mediate plans to send the message, adding that he and his co-authors were interested primarily in kick-starting a discussion about the value of such missives and what they should include.

"There is a real possibility that humans will not exist as a species thousands of years from now, and thus a 'message in a bottle' about the very basic details would at least serve as a small reminder that we existed," said Kristen Fahy, a Jet Propulsion Laboratory scientist and one of the co-authors. "We want people to give their input whether this is the right message that we should be sending," she added.

The message would be beamed out in the form of radio waves from a ground-based radio telescope, like a similar message sent into space in 1974 from the now-defunct Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico. It would be coded in binary form to boost the chances that the contents could be read by aliens no matter what language they might speak or how their sensory apparatus might differ from ours.

Other cosmic missives have been sent in recent decades, and NASA included a message to aliens on each of a pair of

Voyager spacecraft launched toward the solar system's edge in 1977.

That message, sent in the form of a gold-plated phonograph record, included analog-encoded images and a selection of sounds from Earth, featuring whale calls and thunderclaps, greetings recorded in 55 languages and 90 minutes of music including Chuck Berry's iconic "Johnny B. Goode."

Signals from radio and television broadcasts have already seeped beyond our planet over the last century or so, Dr. Werthimer said, though he doesn't consider those signals the same as actively transmitting messages intended for aliens.

Transmission of the message as outlined in the paper could be feasible within a decade, Dr. Fahy said, adding that there are no regulations prohibiting outreach to alien civilizations.

NASA said in March that it had identified 5,000 exoplanets, or planets outside our solar system.

"Let's say you find a signature of life on one of the exoplanets in the future," Dr. Jiang said. "We've got to prepare for communication, and we want to do it early."

U.S. WATCH

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Cameroonians Get Deportation Stay

The Biden administration is offering temporary deportation protections to Cameroonians living in the U.S. without permanent legal status, the Department of Homeland Security said Friday.

The decision follows calls from immigration advocates who say the Cameroonians can't safely return home because of a civil war and rising acts of terrorism that have triggered a refugee crisis in the Central African country.

The program, known as Temporary Protected Status, or TPS, will offer Cameroonians in the U.S. without a permanent legal status—including those on tourist, student or other visas—a shield from deportation and work permits for 18 months, a term that can be renewed. The program will be open to Cameroonians present in the U.S. on or before April 14, meaning Cameroonians who enter the U.S. after that date won't be eligible.

DHS officials have estimated about 11,700 Cameroonians would be eligible for the program.

—Michelle Hackman

IOWA

Democrat Is Back On Senate Race Ballot

The Iowa Supreme Court ruled Friday that Democratic Senate candidate Abby Finkenauer qualifies for the primary ballot, reject-

ing a lower-court decision and allowing her to continue her campaign for the nomination and the chance to face longtime Republican Sen. Chuck Grassley.

The court's unanimous decision leaves Ms. Finkenauer as the likely front-runner in a race with two lesser-known candidates ahead of Iowa's June 7 primary. The winner will run against Mr. Grassley, who is seeking an eighth term in the Senate.

—Associated Press

NEW MEXICO

Winds Threaten To Fan Deadly Fire

Firefighters battling a raging New Mexico wildfire that killed two people and destroyed more than 200 homes in a mountainous community braced Friday for gusty winds that threatened to fan the blaze.

The fire has forced the evacuation of about 5,000 people in the community of Ruidoso, where the remains of a couple were found near a burned home earlier this week as they tried to flee.

The fire sparked by a downed power line had torched an estimated 9.4 square miles of forest and grass as of Friday morning, and the strong winds that battered the area earlier this week left behind toppled trees and down power lines.

Fire crews on Thursday used a break in what had been a steady stream of relentless gusts to make headway against the flames.

—Associated Press



ROCKEFELLER 'N' ROLL: A new roller-skate rink, Flipper's Roller Boogie Palace, at the New York City's landmark opened Friday. The space has long featured a seasonal ice-skating rink.

Bunnies Are (Gasp) Multiplying

Continued from Page One the U.S. Bunnies dig in yards, pilfer homegrown veggies and munch flowers. And domesticated rabbits—bred to be indoors—aren't made for the rougher life outdoors.

Multihued rabbits, from brown and white to gray, were soon bouncing all over Mrs. Barreto's yard, looking cuddly and a bit creepy. At night, more than a dozen rested under a tree out front. Others lazed in her driveway under her car and truck. The fearless rabbits scampered to her feet seeking snacks, she says.

Mrs. Barreto sent out her dog, a Chihuahua-mix named Scrapy. No use. Scrapy yipped but, "they didn't move! The little ones would hide but not the adult ones," she says. "They were saying, 'This is our yard too.'"

Local residents in St. Anthony, Idaho, started calling police in 2020 with similar reports. Details were fuzzy.

"Bunnies getting into people's gardens and bunnies hanging out at someone's house," says Donald Powell, St. Anthony's mayor. The bunny colony in the town stemmed from domesticated rabbits that got loose and multiplied, Mr. Powell says. "They're cute little bunnies until you try to catch them," he says. "They're not too hip on that idea."

So that fall, the community held the "St. Anthony Bunny Catch," catching about 30 rabbits, which would be adopted, with nets or laundry baskets, says City Councilwoman Wendy Sykes. The Bunny Catch didn't scoop up all the rabbits, and it wasn't long before the colony started growing again. "The phrase, 'breed like rabbits?'" Ms. Sykes says. "Yep."

The number of U.S. households owning small pets such as rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, ferrets, rats and mice jumped in recent years, with rabbits being the most popular choice, according to a recent survey by the American Pet Products As-



Lady Bun Bun and Marshmallow in their home at the Micheltorena Community Garden in Los Angeles.

sociation. An estimated 6.2 million U.S. households owned a small animal in 2020, compared with 5.4 million in 2018, according to the group.

Some new owners are ready for the cuddling, but not for the care—from cleaning out poop to regular medical checkups. Some turned rabbits loose while other bunnies escaped.

"Last year was an extraordinary year for rabbit intake," says Laura Flamion, the operations manager for DuPage County Animal Services in Wheaton, Ill. "A peak."

In Lawndale, a city in Los Angeles County, bunnies escaped a home by wriggling under a fence, and then hopped loose on the streets, says Linda Baley, the director of Too Many Bunnies Rabbit Rescue. She labeled the at-large rabbits, "these little boo-boos."

Volunteers at the Micheltorena Community Garden in Los Angeles's Silver Lake took in the bunnies last October. They built the snowy white rabbits a tiny multicolored abode with three levels, small stairs and even a portrait of a bunny family over the faux fireplace. The garden took votes for names on its Instagram page.

Meet the Fluffersteins, a mother (Lady Bun Bun) and son (Marshmallow). "They are the happiest bunnies in the land," says Seven McDonald, a volunteer at the garden.

In Azalea Park in Florida, the rabbit-palooza began in November, when a few rabbits escaped from a couple's backyard, according to bunny rescue volunteers. By this spring, the rabbits had set up near Mrs. Barreto's back shed. As

more litters were born, the rabbits bounced all over the neighborhood and people started referring to Mrs. Barreto as "the bunny lady."

"They would say to me, 'hey, your rabbits are in my yard.' But they are not my rabbits!" she says. "I was getting frustrated." As word spread, Mrs. Barreto found gawkers driving by to take photos of rabbits sprawled on her lawn. Rabbit fans rang her doorbell and she caught a kid, sent by a parent, climbing her fence to grab a bunny. A relative of Mrs. Barreto caught a rabbit and ate it, she says. "He loved it and he wanted to come back and get more." A friend helped her find a rabbit rescue group.

One night this month, Orlando Rabbit Care & Adoptions launched its largest roundup ever. About 40 determined volunteers, donning headlamps and armed with metal screens, descended on Mrs. Barreto's home and spent hours wrangling rabbits. Often six people had to chase one bunny, according to volunteer Jessica Helmer. After three hours, the group caught 23 rabbits, while others escaped what Ms. Helmer called "the bunny SWAT team."

Volunteers came back about a week later and caught one rabbit. Days later, Mrs. Barreto looked out in her backyard—and saw a baby bunny. Her 8-year-old great-grandson caught it and the barretos turned it over to the rescue group. But Mrs. Barreto worries that if other rabbits escaped the roundups, a second bunny boom is only a matter of time.

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THE UKRAINE CRISIS

Port City Holds Off Russian Forces

Mykolaiv—key to Moscow's plans to control the south—has been hard to capture

BY BRETT FORREST

MYKOLAIV, Ukraine—After Ukraine's military repelled successive waves of Russian attacks since the war's outbreak, this front-line port city still stands in the way of Moscow's plans for a renewed offensive.

Shock waves of Russian shelling rattle windows in Mykolaiv nearly every night. Ukrainian forces in recent weeks have moved out, covered by their own artillery batteries, driving Russian troops back toward the occupied city of Kherson and battling along a contested line of control.

"The enemy is defensive now and is digging in," said Roman Kostenko, a Ukrainian parliamentarian and special-operations commander in the region.

After withdrawing forces that encountered stiff resistance in Ukraine's north, Russia is regrouping and recalibrating for a renewed battle in the east and south. Mykolaiv remains a top objective, key to controlling Ukraine's Black Sea rim and a gateway to the strategic port of Odessa.

Russian forces are trying to hold their lines east of Mykolaiv and flying reconnaissance drones as they resupply their troops with ammunition and fuel, said the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Their aim, Mr. Kostenko said, "is to hold our offensive and create favorable conditions for a further offensive to the south."

In a setback, the flagship of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, the warship Moskva, sank Thursday following what the Ukrainian military said was a cruise-missile strike.

Sitting at the deltas of the Dnieper and Southern Bug rivers, Mykolaiv in peacetime handles a considerable portion of Ukraine's seaborne exports.

Workers here built aircraft carriers when Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union. Eleven Ukrainian army brigades stationed in Mykolaiv make the city the most militarized in the southern district, and no easy target.

At the start of the war, Russia marked Mykolaiv for quick capture. On the war's opening day, Feb. 24, Russian forces poured north from Crimea and before long seized Kherson.

"They want to close the sea," said Mykolaiv Mayor Oleksandr Syenkevych. "From Kherson, they need to move to Mykolaiv and then to Odessa."

Mykolaiv proved harder to take. Rolling into the city, Russian tanks were repulsed. Ukraine captured a high-ranking airborne officer. "He told us that he was given the task of capturing Mykolaiv at any cost," said Gen. Dmytro Marchenko, Mykolaiv's garrison commander.

With communications jammed, Ukraine relied on an ad hoc civilian network to report Russian positions and inflicted heavy losses on a second attempted assault by forces trying to cross the Bug River north of Mykolaiv.

Moscow tried a third time last month, sending troops and tanks west from Kherson to strike Mykolaiv from its south. Ukraine's General Staff resolved to make a stand at the village of Oleksandrivka, and its troops fended off the attackers.

"Their plan was to capture the city and use the landing force that they have in Odessa, in order to carry out a naval operation in parallel with the land operation," said Mr. Kostenko, the special-operations commander who took part in the operation. "Mykolaiv did not allow this. We did not let them through."

"The enemy can't move forward," Andrei Rolya, a mechanized-battalion sergeant, said last month after Ukrainian forces repulsed the attack and recaptured territory.

Russian forces claimed to have seized parts of Oleksandrivka. From Kherson and sur-



Sgt. Andrei Rolya stands amid the ruins of a home in Mykolaiv that was destroyed by shelling.



rounding villages they control, they have bombarded Mykolaiv nearly every night and often during the days.

On March 19, Russia struck a military barracks. On March 29, a cruise missile hit the Mykolaiv regional administration building, effectively destroying it. On April 4, shells hit a children's hospital, said

ings and tend to faces disfigured by shrapnel. "Two months ago we had a normal life," said a surgeon. "Everyone here is working in fear they'll hit this building."

Mr. Syenkevych, the Mykolaiv mayor, arrives at meetings with a Kalashnikov rifle strapped across his midsection. "All people who can carry a gun are ready to defend our city," he said. "And they will stay for sure to the last man."

Sgt. Rolya drove a pickup to ferry soldiers and U.S.-made Javelin antitank weapons to the front south of Mykolaiv. The truck is one of four that a group of graduates of the Columbia Business School said they bought with funds they raised.

"Whatever we can do to help these guys," said Gregory Ovsiankyov, a Columbia graduate and entrepreneur from Odessa who coordinated the purchase. "They are essentially protecting Odessa and this whole region."

Explosions Rock Kyiv, Toll Grows

Continued from Page One was hit and sunk by two Ukrainian Neptune missiles, a claim also made by Ukraine. There was no independent confirmation of the use of Neptune missiles, which have thus far been under development. Russia has said the vessel sank from damage suffered from a fire that caused ammunition stores to explode. It said the source of the fire was unknown and that it sank in stormy weather as it was towed to port.

The loss of the warship nonetheless represents a significant blow that could compromise the security of Russia's entire Black Sea Fleet. Since the war began on Feb. 24, Russian ships in the Black Sea have fired cruise missiles at Ukrainian cities, targeting infrastructure, fuel depots, military bases and civilian administrative buildings.

Russia's Defense Ministry said it used anti-aircraft systems to down a Ukrainian helicopter that had fired on a settlement in Russia's Bryansk region, close to the Ukrainian border. Ukraine hasn't commented on the allegations.

The ministry also said it had thwarted a Ukrainian missile attack on a hydroelectric power plant in the Russian-controlled Kherson region in Ukraine's south. Local authorities in Kakhovka, the town next to the power plant, said two people were killed and three injured as a result of shrapnel. Doctors cited by the municipality said the shrapnel came from a rocket intercepted over the nearby town of Plodove.

"In response to acts of sabotage by Ukrainian forces on Russian territory, the number and scale of missile attacks on objects in Kyiv will increase," said Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov.

Residents in the Russian city of Belgorod, near the Ukrainian border, reported twin explosions Friday. Video emerged of Russian air defenses hitting an object over the city, where Rus-

sia two weeks ago accused Ukraine of striking an oil depot. Two days ago, a key Belgorod railway bridge was destroyed, damaging Russia's ability to supply forces deployed in eastern Ukraine.

Mr. Konashenkov said Russia had destroyed a unit of Polish mercenaries and downed a Ukrainian jet fighter in the Kharkiv region.

He also said Russia had captured the Ilyich iron and steel works complex in the besieged city of Mariupol, along the Azov Sea coast. Russia claimed to have taken over control of the city from Ukrainian forces after weeks of heavy bombardment and what local authorities say is a significant civilian death toll.

Encircled in Mariupol, the commander of Ukraine's 36th Marine Brigade, Serhiy Volyna, implored the Ukrainian military to break the siege of the city.

Thousands of locals in Mariupol were said to have been forcibly deported.

The Mariupol city council said on social media that Russia had forcibly deported several thousand local residents to camps within Russia and redirected them to remote cities. Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said nine humanitarian corridors opened on Friday had been successfully used by 2,864 people fleeing from Russian-controlled areas in the southeast to areas under Ukrainian government control. Most people evacuated using private transport.

Meanwhile, Anatoliy Fedoruk, the mayor of Bucha, where a Russian retreat revealed more than 400 civilian deaths, said 85% of the bodies recently recovered had bullet wounds. "Premeditated murder took place in Bucha," he said.

Moscow has denied targeting civilians in its military assault on Ukraine.

The Donbas region of eastern Ukraine has been a coveted prize in President Vladimir Putin's military offensive in Ukraine. Capturing the parts of Donbas that it doesn't al-

Negative Views of U.S. Rise In Russia, Poll Finds

BY MATTHEW LUXMOORE

Russians' attitude toward the U.S. has dramatically worsened since the start of the war in Ukraine, shows a survey by the independent Russian pollster Levada Center.

The poll shows that 72% of Russians hold a negative view of the U.S., up from 55% in February. Only 17% say they have a favorable view, according to the poll, which was published on April 15 based on answers from 1,632 respondents surveyed nationwide in late March.

The survey also shows that attitudes toward the European Union have worsened, while Russians' view of China, Moscow's ally, has markedly improved in the past six months, with 83% of Russians having a favorable view of the country.

The war in Ukraine has given a boost to President Vladimir Putin's popularity, according to Levada. A recent survey found Mr. Putin's approval rose to 83% in March, from 71% in February.

Russian state TV has portrayed the war in Ukraine as a "special military operation" to defend Russian speakers in the country from nationalists backed by the U.S. and EU, pushing the narrative that the real standoff in Ukraine is between Moscow and the West.

The results from Russia echo a Pew poll showing a similarly dramatic shift in how U.S. citizens view their Russian counterparts. A Pew Research Center poll published April 6 found 70% of Americans consider Russia an enemy of the U.S., up from 41% in January. The view appears to cross party lines, with 72% of Democrats and 69% of Republicans holding it.

ready control would allow Russia to claim it has defended the predominantly Russian-speaking part of the country from oppression.

Before the Feb. 24 invasion, Mr. Putin said Russia was recognizing the independence of the two self-declared republics that control parts of the Donbas, and Russian forces have since been consolidating their positions there in advance of what is expected to be a fresh offensive. Mr. Putin said this past week that peace talks with Ukraine had reached a dead end, and the Kremlin has insisted that the military operation is going according to plan.

"The operation continues," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Friday. "The goals set are well known, they should and will be completed. There should be no doubt whatsoever."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said in his nightly address that "in the occupied districts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, the Russian military continue to terrorize civilian residents of our country. They are looking for anyone who has ever been associated with the Ukrainian army or government agencies."

Russia, meanwhile, denounced plans by Sweden and Finland to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The two countries, which have a long tradition of military neutrality, are considering joining the bloc and will make a decision in coming weeks.

In an ominous sign for the country's economy, Russia is also facing the possibility of defaulting on foreign debt for the first time since the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Moody's Corp. said the country may be in default after trying to service two sovereign bonds in rubles rather than U.S. dollars, which changes the payment terms in the original bond contracts.

Russia could avoid default, the ratings firm said, if it switches its payments to dollars by May 4. That may not be easy as sanctions from the U.S. and Europe on its central bank and finance ministry have hemmed in what it can do with its funds.

—Gordon Lubold contributed to this article.

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WORLD NEWS

At Least 150 Hurt at Jerusalem Holy Site

Palestinians, Israeli police clash at Al Aqsa mosque compound amid rising tensions

By DOV LIEBER

Israeli police and Palestinians clashed Friday around Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, leaving more than 150 people injured, while raising the threat of a wider conflict and the prospect of Arab resignations that could topple Israel's coalition government.

Tensions are high due to overlapping religious holidays that have brought tens of thousands of worshippers to the Old City.

Israeli police said they were forced to use crowd-dispersal measures around Al Aqsa mosque after groups of young masked men attacked security forces with fireworks, stones and other heavy objects. The Palestinian Red Crescent said at least 153 people were injured by stun grenades, rubber bullets and beatings. Israel's police said three officers were hurt.

Israeli police said they detained hundreds of people who took part in the clashes early in the day, which allowed them to reopen the site. More than

50,000 people offered prayers at the mosque in the afternoon, security forces said.

Nabil Abu Rudeineh, the spokesman for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, said the police measures around the mosque were "tantamount to declaring war on the Palestinian people."

The clashes were reminiscent of what occurred last year, when violent confrontations between Israeli forces and Palestinians in and around Al Aqsa mosque contributed to the deadly conflict between Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas. Israeli police are on high alert after a series of terrorist attacks that have killed 14 people since late March.

The incidents threaten Israel's fragile coalition government, which for the first time includes an independent Arab Israeli party. Mansour Abbas, the head of the Islamist Ra'am party, threatened to pull his support if the clashes continued, a move that could swiftly bring down Israel's ruling coalition government. "Al Aqsa is a red line for us," Mr. Abbas said in an interview with Arabic language station A-Shams.

The mosque is located on a hilltop plaza known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary, one of Islam's holiest sites,



Israeli police skirmished with Palestinians outside of the Al Aqsa mosque Friday,

and known to the Jews as the Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site. While Jews are permitted to visit Temple Mount, they can only pray below at the Western Wall, which is part of the compound. Only Muslims are allowed to pray at the site, but that has started changing in recent years.

The site is the most sensitive Israeli-Palestinian flashpoint, and violence there has sparked wider escalations many times.

Jerusalem is on edge as Mus-

lims celebrate the holy month of Ramadan, Jews start the Passover holidays and Christians celebrate Easter. All three are happening at once for the first time in about three decades.

Alongside the thousands of Muslim worshippers offering Friday prayers at the Al Aqsa mosque, large groups of Jewish worshippers gathered at the Western Wall to celebrate the start of Passover in the evening. Israeli police said some Palestinians at the compound threw

stones at Jewish worshippers.

To try to prevent attacks over Passover, Israel announced a lockdown of the West Bank and Gaza Strip starting Friday afternoon and continuing at least through Saturday. Such steps frequently are taken around Jewish holidays during times of tensions. Palestinian militant groups often have timed attacks around these holidays.

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh vowed Friday to protect

the Al Aqsa mosque "no matter the price."

Separately, in the northern Israeli city of Haifa, a 47-year-old man was injured after he was stabbed by a 15-year-old Arab. Israeli police said the teenager's father alerted police that his daughter intended to carry out an attack in Jerusalem, just as the police dispatch reported to officers that she stabbed someone in her hometown.

After the spate of recent attacks, Israel's military carried out several operations in the West Bank, arresting suspects believed to be connected to the violence or planning other assaults. This has led to several clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinians in the West Bank, leaving six dead in the past 24 hours and 11 in the past week, according to Palestinian medical officials.

A total of 44 Palestinians have been killed in confrontations with Israeli security forces in the West Bank this year.

—Fatima AbdulKarim contributed to this article.

Watch a Video

Scan this code to see a video about the clashes in Jerusalem.



U.S. Lawmakers' Trip to Taiwan Draws Beijing Ire

By JOYU WANG

TAIPEI—Six U.S. lawmakers met with Taiwan's leader Friday in a show of support for the island democracy, in a surprise trip that signals more tension between Washington and Beijing.

The six-member delegation, led by Sen. Lindsey Graham (R., S.C.) and Senate Foreign Relations Committee chair Bob Menendez (D., N.J.), blasted Beijing for what it described as China's support for Russian President Vladimir Putin's in-

vasion of Ukraine. The visit prompted a military response and angry words from Beijing.

"We are going to start making China pay a greater price for what they are doing all over the world. The support for Putin must come with a price," Mr. Graham told Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen. "To abandon Taiwan would be to abandon democracy and freedom."

Sens. Graham and Menendez were joined by Sens. Richard Burr (R., N.C.), Rob Portman (R., Ohio) and Ben Sasse (R., Neb.), and Rep. Ronny

Jackson (R., Texas).

In addition to Ms. Tsai, the congressional delegation met with Taiwan's defense minister and other senior officials.

The trip comes as Washington seeks to reassure Taiwan of its support, while warning Beijing against attempts to change the status quo with military action.

The war in Ukraine has turned a spotlight on how Washington would respond in the event of a Chinese attack on Taiwan, a democratically governed island that China's Com-

munist Party has never ruled but claims as part of its territory and has vowed to win control over, by force if necessary.

A spokesman for China's military, the People's Liberation Army, said Friday that the U.S. delegation sent a "serious wrong signal" to Taiwan, warning against what it described as external interference in support of Taiwanese separatists.

A social-media post published by the Chinese military's Eastern Theater Command said destroyers, bomber and fighters engaged in a joint combat exer-

cise and readiness patrol Friday.

Beijing has ratcheted up its military activity around Taiwan in recent years, sending warplanes into Taiwan's vicinity on a near-daily basis as diplomatic ties between Washington and Taipei have strengthened.

"They are very unhappy that we are here, but that did not dissuade us from coming and it won't dissuade us in the future in supporting Taiwan," Mr. Menendez told Ms. Tsai.

The bipartisan delegation's trip to Taipei came as U.S. national security adviser Jake

Sullivan said the U.S. is seeking to prevent a potential Chinese attack on Taiwan. "We are going to take every step we possibly can to ensure that never happens," Mr. Sullivan said at the Economic Club of Washington, D.C., on Thursday.

Earlier this month, the State Department notified Congress that it had agreed to sell \$95 million in equipment, training and other services to support the island's Patriot Air Defense System, the second such deal the White House has pushed through this year.

WORLD WATCH



North Korea's biggest national holiday's festivities featured dancing and fireworks, but not an extravagant military parade. Past holidays have been used to unveil new weapons.

NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang Marks National Holiday

North Korea held major celebrations tied to its biggest national holiday Friday, with Kim Jong Un looking to boost morale during a time of economic hardship and project outward strength following a spree of missile tests.

It had been widely expected that the April 15 festivities—honoring the birth of North Korea's late founder—would include an extravagant military parade.

Mr. Kim, the third-generation leader, has used such high-profile occasions in the past to unveil new weapons or deliver speeches that provide insights into the cloistered regime's thinking.

But North Korean state media said the celebration in Pyongyang would entail large-scale events, including dance performances by young people, live music and a fireworks show. It didn't mention a military parade.

Officials in Seoul haven't detected movement of major weapons and expect a parade could come later in the month, pegged to another key North Korean holiday celebrating the military's founding on April 25, a South Korean Unification Ministry spokesman said Friday.

—Dasl Yoon

MALAYSIA

Ferrero to Stop Use Of Cited Firm's Oil

Ferrero International SA, the maker of Nutella, said it is going to stop sourcing palm oil—a key ingredient in the sweet spread—from Sime Darby Plantation Bhd. in Malaysia after the U.S. government found the company used forced labor.

A Ferrero spokeswoman said the company asked its direct suppliers on April 6 to stop supplying Ferrero with palm oil or palm-kernel oil that came indirectly from Sime Darby. The spokeswoman said about 0.25% of Ferrero's palm oil comes from the Malaysian company.

Ferrero also is the maker of Tic Tacs and Ferrero Rocher candy. Palm oil and its derivatives are used in products including chocolate, makeup and biofuels, in addition to being used as a cooking oil.

Ferrero's decision follows a forced-labor finding from U.S. Customs and Border Protection in January that said Sime Darby used forced labor in its operations.

Sime Darby Plantation didn't respond to a request to comment. The company has a presence in more than 100 countries, according to its website.

—Allison Prang

SYRIA

New Cause Found For Blasts at Base

The U.S. military says explosions this month on a base in eastern Syria that injured several U.S. service members weren't, as it originally reported, caused by artillery or another form of indirect fire.

Instead, it is now believed the April 7 attack was carried out by the "deliberate placement of explosive charges" by one or more individuals at an ammunition-holding area and shower facility on the base, according to U.S. military officials.

—Associated Press

YEMEN

Al Qaeda Militants Escape From Prison

Ten jailed al Qaeda militants escaped from prison in Yemen's eastern province of Hadramawt, security officials said Friday.

The inmates staged a quarrel among themselves late Thursday at the prison in the city of Seiyun, forcing guards to intervene. When they did, the prisoners overpowered them, seizing their Kalashnikov rifles and binding their hands before fleeing, officials said.

—Associated Press

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WORLD NEWS

Anger Rises Over Shanghai Lockdown

Restrictions strain nerves in China's wealthiest city, eroding trust in authorities

By Stella Yifan Xie
and Natasha Khan

Discontent is deepening across Shanghai, China's largest and wealthiest city, now several weeks into a rigid lockdown aimed at crushing a Covid outbreak that is straining the nerves and affecting livelihoods of its 25 million residents and eroding the public's trust in authorities.

The effects that have played out in recent weeks—food shortages, lack of access to medical care, overcrowded quarantine centers and infants separated from their parents—have frayed nerves across a city that has long prided itself as a pragmatic financial hub at the forefront of China's decades-long shift to a market economy.

"I've lost confidence in this government," said one 36-year-old Shanghai native surnamed Chen, who declined to provide his given name because it remains risky to openly criticize political leaders. "Only during a crisis can you make a proper evaluation of the government's performance."

Mr. Chen, who has been confined at home for more than a month, said he hasn't been able to feed his family of four on the government-supplied rations of vegetables and milk. While he has managed to order some groceries online, soaring prices and scarce supplies of bread and other essentials risk draining his savings as the lockdown drags on, he said.

"We've waited patiently for the lockdown to get lifted. When will this end?" he said.

Shanghai eased rules in some neighborhoods this week, but most residents remain confined to their homes. Some expressed worries about food and said they are increasingly disillusioned by the prospect of an open-ended Covid lockdown.

Among more than two dozen residents who spoke from lockdown, some said they are reaching a breaking point more than two years into the pandemic. Some are considering leaving the country for good.

"The damage has been done," said Liu Yun, a 34-year-old Shanghai native and technology entrepreneur who said he has begun contemplating emigrating to Singapore. "More elites will start re-evaluating their relationship with the city and this country."

Others said they expect some economic and psychological scars to endure, along with re-



A Shanghai resident was tested for Covid last weekend. Right, community workers delivered food rations on Tuesday.

sentment toward Beijing. China has stuck to a zero-Covid policy under Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

Eighty-seven of China's biggest 100 cities, collectively accounting for more than half of China's population and overall economic output, have imposed restrictions because of the current outbreak, according to an estimate by Gavekal Dragonomics, a research firm.

Few cities in China have the economic and political importance of Shanghai, which for most of the past century has been a base of prosperity at the forefront of the country's engagement with the world.

Since the broad lockdowns began in late March, food shortages have spread as pandemic measures upended supply chains, leaving some reliant on bartering and the goodwill of neighbors to survive. Some patients with non-Covid medical needs have been left to fend for themselves, while many have resisted being sent to the city's chaotic and in some cases unhygienic quarantine centers.

Authorities have been swift to censor people's complaints and what they call rumors online. On March 22, two men who shared information about Shanghai's coming lockdown were investigated by the police on suspicions of "spreading fabricated information." As the lockdown continues, more people are venting frustration at the Covid restrictions, saying they are harming people's livelihoods and straining medical



resources, despite potential repercussions.

In a viral online post, one Shanghai resident complained that the endurance of residents had "reached its limit," listing a litany of tragedies and grievances. "Are there officials who still listen to the people?" wrote the person, who identified herself only as An Ordinary Citizen. "How much more do we have to pay in exchange for truly putting people first?"

The post was blocked on Thursday for a few hours before being restored that evening. The person didn't respond to a request to comment.

Frank Tsai, a longtime Shanghai resident who hosts business and cultural events through his company China Crossroads, initially supported the country's strict Covid measures, but said he was shocked by the food and supply bottlenecks in Shanghai, which is widely regarded as one of China's most progressive and best-managed cities.

"This regime from its very

founding was built on the elimination of material anxiety, so it's ironic that food insecurity is happening in Shanghai of all places," he said.

People must "firmly hold on to its pandemic policy without wavering," China's state-run Xinhua News Agency said Thursday in an editorial, calling on the public to "look at the big picture" despite the hardships. "Persistence is victory," Mr. Xi was quoted saying. The People's Daily, the Communist Party organ, implored citizens to "grit their teeth" and put their faith in officials.

Some expatriates said the current lockdown is the final straw after several years in which they felt China was turning increasingly inward. "We are at a critical point. People are really fed up," said Bettina Schoen-Behanzin, vice president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China.

Mr. Liu, the technology entrepreneur, was first confined to his home with his wife and two children on March 14,

when the entrance to his residential compound was abruptly sealed after several neighbors were identified as "close contacts" with infected individuals. Later, the stringent citywide lockdowns began.

Mr. Liu's social-media feed became filled with videos and messages of physical conflicts between residents and health workers tasked with keeping people at home, making him more anxious and pessimistic.

"I'm afraid that this fight against the pandemic will evolve into some kind of social movement, where people at the bottom of the society end up hurting each other," said Mr. Liu. "That's terrifying."

Mr. Liu said he also worries about the roughly 200 employees at the company he founded, a business-to-business e-commerce platform, many of whom are struggling to get enough food during the lockdown.

Li Bing, a 33-year-old employee at a different technology company, said he felt emotionally weighed down after reading numerous online pleas from residents struggling to get enough food and medical help. Last week, a video showing a pandemic prevention worker in a hazmat suit beating a corgi to death after its owners were sent to a centralized quarantine center sparked online fury.

"What would happen to my cats? Would they be beaten to death?" said Mr. Li, a native of Xi'an who has lived in Shanghai for six years with his girlfriend and two cats. He said the prospect of testing positive for Covid has stirred his anxiety and made him more eager to leave China than ever.

Chinese Central Bank Eases Lending Restraints

By Jason Douglas

SINGAPORE—China's central bank relaxed a key constraint on bank lending, while keeping benchmark interest rates unchanged, steps that economists said will do little to spur growth in an economy struggling with its worst Covid-19 outbreak since the pandemic began.

The limited effort implies large-scale monetary stimulus of the kind seen in 2020 at the start of the pandemic and after the 2008-09 financial crisis might not be repeated this year, economists said, putting the onus on the government to prop up faltering growth with big increases in spending.

The People's Bank of China on Friday lowered banks' reserve-requirement ratio by one-quarter of a percentage point, to a weighted average of 8.1%, freeing up 530 billion yuan, equivalent to around \$83 billion, on banks' balance sheets that can be funneled into new loans. The ratio allows the central bank to vary the amount of reserves banks are required to hold, measured as a proportion of their deposits.

The cut takes effect April 25, and some smaller banks will get another quarter-point cut, the PBOC said. The central bank said it would monitor inflation and shifts in policy by other central banks.

Some analysts expected a bigger reduction in the reserve ratio, of 0.5 or 1.0 percentage point. The central bank earlier Friday held steady a key interest rate on a program that dishes out cheap, one-year loans to banks to finance new lending, also a disappointment for analysts anticipating a cut.

"There is a chance that the stimulus largess of 2008 and 2020 could be repeated if growth concerns continue to build," Capital Economics senior China economist Julian Evans-Pritchard said in a client note.

The world's second-largest economy is straining under the restrictions imposed on major cities such as Shanghai to stem outbreaks of the Omicron variant of Covid-19. Policy makers also are dealing with a downturn in real estate and a pullback in exports, as consumers world-wide buckle under the pressure of soaring commodity prices fueled by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

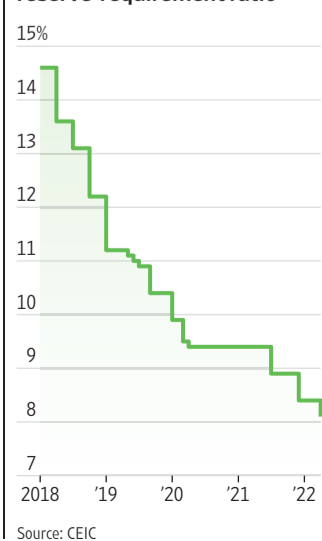
These and other headwinds mean many economists are skeptical the economy will meet the government's growth goal of about 5.5% this year, in an important political year for Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who is set to break with recent precedent and seek a third term.

Though economists say some further easing steps by China's central bank are likely this year, many are doubtful that monetary policy can do much to help. Government efforts to quell a frothy real-estate market are sapping demand for home loans. Lockdowns, and the threat of lockdowns, hurt consumer spending and businesses' appetite to invest in expanding.

Frederic Neumann, co-head of Asia economics research at HSBC in Hong Kong, likened trying to juice growth while imposing severe Covid restrictions to accelerating a race car with the handbrake on.

"If you have lockdowns, you can cut rates as much as you want but you're not going to get a big response," he said.

Chinese banks' average reserve-requirement ratio



Car Makers Set to Restart Chinese Plants

By Yoko Kubota
and Lingling Wei

Auto makers including Tesla Inc. and SAIC Motor Corp. are aiming to resume production next week in Shanghai, people familiar with the matter said, as fears grow over the devastating impact on the economy of prolonging factory closures as a result of China's stringent Covid-19 control measures.

Meanwhile, more cities in China tightened Covid restrictions Friday, including Xi'an, a city of about 13 million that emerged from weeks of lockdown just months ago, a sign China's strict approach to controlling outbreaks continue to weigh on the nation's economy.

Some economists expect China's economic growth this year to fall well short of the official target of about 5.5%—a rate of expansion seen by senior officials as needed to create more than 11 million urban jobs. China is set to release its first-quarter economic results Monday.

Tesla, which halted manufacturing at its Shanghai factory on March 28, is preparing to restart some production there Monday, people familiar with the matter said. The U.S. electric-car maker plans to start with one shift and increase to two shifts by the end of April, as it expects that more workers would be released from lockdowns, one of the people said. The plan could still change if cases surge again and the city tightens controls, the people said.

Shanghai-based SAIC, China's largest state-owned auto maker and one of the



A truck transported new Tesla cars at its factory in Shanghai in May 2021.

city's biggest employers, also is preparing to resume production in stages at its plants starting next week, according to a Shanghai official briefed on the matter and an internal company notice viewed by The Wall Street Journal.

While SAIC has kept some of its plants operating under a closed-loop system during the Shanghai lockdown, others have halted production. That includes the plant it jointly operates with Volkswagen AG, the German car maker said.

Employees returning to work at Tesla and SAIC's plants must get Covid tests every 48 hours, according to the people and the SAIC notice.

Tesla, SAIC and Volkswagen didn't respond to requests to

comment sent in after Friday working hours in China.

On Friday, China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology vowed to help key companies in Shanghai resume work by clearing logistical obstacles and ensuring supplies of key raw materials. It has made a priority list of 666 companies in key industries such as automotive, semiconductor and biomedicine to make sure they can restart, it said on its website.

Car manufacturing, one of the biggest contributors to China's gross domestic product, is among the industries hardest hit by China's Covid-19 controls and lockdowns in cities like Shanghai, as well as Changchun, another automotive hub that was closed for

nearly a month until last week.

Car sales dropped 10.5% in March from a year earlier, and industry executives and analysts expect April numbers will show further declines. Shanghai accounts for 11% of China's automotive production, and some suppliers there also export components.

Auto and technology executives in recent days have warned that extended production halts in the Shanghai area could lead to big economic losses.

"If production couldn't be resumed in Shanghai, all technology and industrial sectors with supply-chain links to Shanghai—especially the auto industry—will be completely shut down after May, causing a huge economic price," Richard Yu,

the head of Huawei Technologies Co.'s automotive solution sector, said Friday in a post on social-media platform WeChat.

That followed concerns shared by the chief executive of electric car maker XPeng Inc. on Thursday. He Xiaopeng said all auto makers in China could be forced to suspend production in May if suppliers in Shanghai and surrounding areas can't resume operations. In a WeChat post, Mr. He also said that he expects more support from the government as authorities are trying to coordinate on the matter.

In a poll of 102 companies across 31 cities in China, analysts at Goldman Sachs found that 94% of the auto-sector companies surveyed are facing challenges in production and material sourcing, because of their just-in-time production models. Meanwhile, impact on semiconductor, hardware and industrial tech sectors was minimal, they said.

Logistics is a common bottleneck for manufacturers in eastern China, the Goldman Sachs analysts said. Many companies and truck drivers have blamed strict pandemic-control measures and some inconsistency in policies from different authorities for the supply-chain jam.

Big shipyards in Shanghai such as Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding (Group) Co., Jianguan Shipyard (Group) Co. and Shanghai Waigaoqiao Shipbuilding Co. have effectively halted operations since mid-March, and have over the past 10 days declared force majeure on pending ship deliveries, due to the city's lockdowns, shipbuilding executives said.

OBITUARIES

DAVID M. TRACY
1924 – 2022

Executive Added Élan To Sheets and Towels

By age 8, David M. Tracy was cleaning looms at a textile mill near his home in Uxbridge, Mass. The job proved surprisingly relevant to his eventual career as a marketer of towels and sheets who worked with Ralph Lauren and other designers and helped persuade Americans that their bedrooms and bathrooms should be as color-coordinated as their clothing.

In the 1950s, when he was a young sales manager for Fieldcrest Mills Inc., Mr. Tracy promoted the company's Royal Velvet towels. "You've never known what real towel luxury can be until you caress yourself with Fieldcrest Royal Velvet towels," gushed one department-store ad. Some stores stacked up whole walls of towels

to show off the colors, including ice pink, lemon and peach.

In 1977, Mr. Tracy told the Chicago Tribune that even bars of soap should match bathroom towels and bath rugs. To simplify the task, Fieldcrest offered Royal Velvet soap in the hues of its most popular towels. "Until now," he said, "it's been hard to find soap in more than half a dozen colors."

Mr. Tracy eventually headed the company's marketing arm. In 1981, after 33 years at Fieldcrest, he jumped to J.P. Stevens & Co., where, as senior marketing executive and vice chairman, he led the introduction of Mr. Lauren's home-furnishings line.

Mr. Tracy died April 9. He was 98 years old.

—James R. Hagerty

DURK JAGER
1943 – 2022

Foreign-Born CEO Led P&G—Briefly

At Procter & Gamble Co., Durk Jager was known as a demanding boss who sometimes joked that he would break employees' kneecaps if they didn't follow his orders.

In January 1999, he became the first chief executive officer of P&G born outside the U.S. His predecessor, John Pepper, said the Netherlands-born Mr. Jager personified "the essential qualities that will be critical to realizing the goals and vision we are pursuing."

Seventeen months later, Mr. Jager's 30-year P&G career was over. The board, alarmed by earnings shortfalls and a corporate reorganization that left employees

confused and angry, handed the top job to A.G. Lafley, who said the company had "changed too much too fast." P&G's market value had fallen about \$73 billion, or 50%.

Mr. Jager collected \$9.5 million in severance pay and joined the boards of other companies, including Polycom Inc. and Chiquita Brands International Inc. He could still be blunt. When Mr. Jager resigned from Chiquita's board in 2010, he wrote that the banana company lacked the ability to address "basic operational requirements for a sound business."

Mr. Jager died at home April 3 of what his family described as natural causes. He was 78.

—James R. Hagerty

CHARLES P. MCCORMICK JR.
1928 – 2022

McCormick CEO Saved Spice Maker

By James R. Hagerty

Though he was a descendant of the founder of McCormick & Co. and son of a revered former chief executive of the spice company, Charles P. McCormick Jr., known as "Buzz," seemed unlikely to get the top job.

Mr. McCormick, who died March 27 at the age of 93, was a late-blooming college dropout who bounced around the company for more than three decades. "I definitely did not consider myself a candidate" for CEO, he told the Baltimore Sun. "Neither did anybody else."

Then he impressed colleagues with his deft management of McCormick's packaging business in the 1980s. When the CEO job came open in 1987, he got the nod to run the dominant U.S. spice supplier, based in Hunt Valley, Md.

He agreed to sell McCormick's real-estate division in 1988 to focus on the core, spices. It was "dumb luck" that the timing was perfect, shortly before a real-estate slump, he said.

Mr. McCormick also refreshed the packaging, replacing tin boxes with clear plastic bottles.

Profit grew, and the stock price soared. Eager to spend more time on sailboats, he retired in 1992 at age 64. Three years later he came out of retirement to lead McCormick through a challenge from Burns, Philp & Co., an Australian company that acquired the Durkee and Spice Islands brands. After a costly battle for supermarket shelf space, McCormick emerged victorious. Mr. McCormick retired for good in 1999.

Charles Perry McCormick Jr. was born May 29, 1928, in Baltimore. A nurse gave him the nickname Buzz, inspired by the company's Bee brand extracts and spices.

One of his grand uncles, Wil-



loughby M. McCormick, founded the company in a cellar in 1889. Early products included glue, root beer, flavoring extracts, syrups and Uncle Sam's Nerve and Bone Lintiment, advertised as a cure-all for people and livestock. The founder sold his wares door to door.

After Willoughby McCormick died in 1932, management of the company passed to a nephew, Charles P. McCormick Sr., father of Buzz. Mr. McCormick Sr. wrote management books, including "The Power of People," and pioneered the idea of soliciting ideas from workers and middle managers. During the Depression, he raised wages.

Buzz McCormick excelled at lacrosse as a teenager. "I was a terrible student," he later told the Sun. He lasted only briefly as a business student at Johns Hopkins University and Duke University. He felt more comfortable as a salesman for the spice company.

"I was kind of a shy, quiet little guy," Mr. McCormick said. "I didn't have any born talent as a salesman. It was difficult for me, but I enjoyed it." Selling appealed to his competitive streak.

He was able to bounce back from

defeats, such as his effort in the 1950s to pitch a new product, McCormick's Fluffy instant mashed potatoes, to a grocer in Tampa, Fla. "He let me go through the whole pitch with graphs, charts and everything," Mr. McCormick recalled. "And then at the end he said: 'No, son, I've already got one brand of marshmallows, and I don't need any more.'"

He led the introduction of another product, packets of powder stirred into water to make a sweet drink. That product flopped, partly because of a manufacturing flaw that caused the packets to swell. "If you stepped on one it would go off like a firecracker," Mr. McCormick said. He concluded that the company should stick to spices.

When he first became CEO, he said, his priority was "to help all of our employees have a better life." Following his father's example, he asked employees for their ideas. "What we needed was leadership, with a clear vision as to what we wanted to do and what we didn't want to do," he said later. "So we had to tell our folks—not how to do it—but where we wanted them to go and where we didn't want to go."

He ran the company in tandem with another top executive, Bailey Thomas, in what was dubbed "the Buzz and Bailey show."

Mr. McCormick retired in Stuart, Fla. His survivors include three children and 10 grandchildren. He married the former Jimi Helen Faulk in 1980. She died in 2013. An earlier marriage ended in divorce.

He was a two-time winner of the High Point Trophy for top sailboat racers on Chesapeake Bay. At age 90, he managed to "shoot his own age," completing a round of golf in 90 strokes.

◆ Read in-depth profiles at [WSJ.com/news/types/obituaries](https://www.wsj.com/news/types/obituaries)

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THE CHASM
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 Partnership
to End Addiction

FROM PAGE ONE



Clockwise from top right, Mohammad and his wife, Bibi, hold James's younger brother, Sultan; the couple returning from a trip to the store after arriving in California; James hugging Sayed, his uncle, in Abu Dhabi. The family asked their faces not be shown in photos for safety.



ANDREA DICENZO FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

RACHEL BUJALSKI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (2)

A Dad Hunts for His Son

Continued from Page One
covering from a cesarean section and spoke no English. If he stayed behind, he feared what would happen to her and the baby on what would be an uncertain journey. Yet if he joined them on the flight, he would abandon James to a city overrun by insurgents.

He gave a description of James to the soldiers who promised to look for the boy. "On one side I was thinking about James, and, on the other side, the very small baby," said Mohammad. The Wall Street Journal agreed to use only first names for him and his family.

Once he reached the runway tarmac, Mohammad tried phoning James. U.S. soldiers, on edge after the recent bombing, ordered him to put away his cellphone. "If you take your phone out again, I will break it," he recalled a soldier saying.

Mohammad tried to stall for time, but soldiers said the idling military plane was a last chance to flee. He boarded.

There were no seats inside the crowded C-17 transport plane. Most of the passengers had to stand. Some cleared a space for Bibi to sit on the floor with the infant tucked in a travel crib. She sobbed in pain, and for James. The plane took off but no one on board knew where they would land.

Outside the airport, James sat on a curb, holding a plastic bag with his Afghanistan passport and a cellphone. He was among thousands of children and parents separated in the chaotic evacuation of Kabul.

Some families got lucky and were reunited at military bases abroad. Many more are trapped in separate countries, awaiting help from the State Department, which is overwhelmed by the flood of refugees seeking entry into the U.S. The Biden administration plans to accept as many as 100,000 Ukrainians fleeing another war, and many of them will run into the immigration bottleneck created by the collapse of Afghanistan and the journey of people like Mohammad and his family.

When James realized he had lost his parents, he cried. His family's life had been comfortable. They lived in a house with a big living room and kitchen. His mother, Bibi, cooked rice dishes and kebabs. She was studying medicine and hoped to become a dentist

and treat women, who in Afghanistan are often denied medical services performed by men. The family had no plans to leave Kabul.

James's father, Mohammad, ran a nonprofit that he had set up in the 1990s to help Afghans overcome opiate addiction. He continued to direct it after moving to the Bay Area in 1999 for an arranged marriage with an American woman of Afghan descent. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, he worked as an adviser

their Afghan SIM cards didn't work outside Afghanistan.

Three days later, Mohammad, Bibi and the baby boarded a flight to Washington and then to Fort McCoy Army base in Wisconsin.

The only area with Wi-Fi there was filled with hundreds of people. On the second day of trying, Mohammad got an internet connection. Dozens of days-old messages popped up from James.

Almost a week after leaving his boy in Kabul, Mohammad

He tried to reach relatives in Kabul, but his calls went unanswered. Family members had fled to Badakhshan, a province on the northernmost tip of Afghanistan, mountainous land with little internet service. They finally reached Bibi's sister, but no one had heard from Bibi's brother Sayed, the one person they hoped could retrieve James.

At Fort McCoy, Mohammad pressed U.S. immigration officials and others about how he could return to Afghanistan to

show that about 60 children have been reunited with a mother or father; one in five remain in government care. Most have been placed with relatives and family friends.

An unknown number of children, like James, were stranded in Afghanistan. After a pause in flights this winter, the State Department is again trying to evacuate parents in Afghanistan whose children traveled to the U.S. without them, a spokesman said. The resumption of flights has allowed a number of parents to join their children, he said.

Mohammad learned from another evacuee at Fort Pickett about Task Force Argo, a volunteer group made up of American veterans and current and former government employees. It was still chartering evacuation flights out of Afghanistan.

Mohammad left messages, saying an American's child was trapped in Afghanistan, and the U.S. government couldn't help. The group, which was arranging flights out of the city of Mazar-e-Sharif, agreed to take the case.

"America needs to step back up to the plate and demonstrate that we don't abandon allies or children of American citizens," said Jesse Jensen, co-founder of Task Force Argo. "If the U.S. government won't do that, we will."

Mohammad kept trying to reach Bibi's brother, Sayed, who had been studying international relations in Kabul.

After the city fell, Sayed left for Badakhshan. He worried about family members, who had scattered, and struggled to make contact. A friend offered to guide him to a spot atop a nearby mountain where he could get reception. They began their trek the next day.

Once they reached the peak, Sayed's phone pinged with about 30 notifications of messages from Bibi.

"WHERE ARE YOU?" By chance, the phone rang soon after Sayed connected to the internet. "When I answered, my sister was crying," he said. He learned that James was in Kabul, and he promised to return for the boy.

Sayed took an overnight bus to Kabul, fearing that travel by car was too risky because of robbers and Taliban checkpoints. He wore traditional Afghan garb to keep from being noticed.

In Kabul, he went to an aunt's house and messaged Mohammad for instructions. The next day, Sayed reached the man caring for James, and they arranged to meet at the man's house.

Sayed arrived, and the man brought James outside. Sayed cried and hugged the boy. That

night they boarded a bus for Mazar-e-Sharif, where Task Force Argo's charter flight would leave.

The Taliban later showed up at the man's house in Kabul, asking about the son of an American. They searched but found nothing. After they returned a second time, the man moved his wife and two young children into hiding.

Escape

Sayed and his nephew stayed four nights at a hotel while waiting for their flight. James had nightmares. "Where is my mom, where are they taking me?" he shouted out in his sleep, Sayed recalled.

During the second week of October, they boarded one of the last evacuation flights out of Afghanistan and landed in the United Arab Emirates.

About 9,000 Afghans are still held in a secure compound known as "Emirates Humanitarian City" waiting for their cases to be processed. That includes James and his uncle. They have tried to make the best of their stay.

The U.S. Embassy has an office for interviews, but it is slow going. Thousands of people have yet to start their immigration process. The State Department says many won't be eligible to reach the U.S. after all. They will have to find another country.

James has fewer nightmares, and he talks with his parents every day.

Mohammad and Bibi recently left Fort McCoy and moved into a room with a kitchenette at a roadside motel outside Sacramento, Calif. They send James videos of life in America—the Walmart and the motel pool.

On a recent day, Mohammad answered a call from James and pantomimed a bear hug. "How are you, my boy," he said in Dari.

They talked about what James had studied that day. For dinner, the boy had a traditional Afghan pudding called shir birinj. Your mom has prepared it for our guests, Mohammad told his son, gesturing to two visitors.

Mohammad and Bibi argue over what the family should do next. They sold one of their two apartments in Kabul, but the money has been frozen in Afghan bank accounts. "My wife is asking, 'Why did you bring me here?'" he said.

After the phone call, Mohammad and Bibi watched an old video of James wrestling his father. Bibi bounced baby Sultan on her lap. As she watched, her tears fell and so did her husband's.

—Ehsanullah Amiri contributed to this article.

"I found a little boy crying in a corner because he couldn't find his family. I couldn't just leave him there."

The man in Kabul who helped James

to the Marines in California and Afghanistan. He gained U.S. citizenship 16 years ago.

After his first marriage failed, Mohammad started a second family with Bibi in Kabul. They named their son Sayed. His nickname came from the James Bond movies he loved. His brother, Sultan, was born on his eighth birthday. Kabul fell three days later.

Taliban fighters showed up at the family's house looking for an American named James. Mohammad brought his son to the door. "He is just 8 years old," he told them. "There has been a mistake." That was when he decided the family had to leave.

Days later, the U.S. Embassy sent a message telling American citizens to head to the airport. Mohammad and his wife packed food and diapers, locked the door to their house, headed to the airport and left.

Outside the Kabul airport, where James sat lost and alone, an Afghan man passed with his nephew. "I found a little boy crying in a corner because he couldn't find his family," the man said, "I couldn't just leave him there."

The man brought James home. On the way there, he and his nephew tried the numbers programmed into James's phone. No one answered. Mohammad's phone was dead.

Hostage threat

On the family's flight from Kabul, the passengers learned their destination was a U.S. military base in Bahrain.

After landing, Mohammad charged his phone but couldn't get Wi-Fi service. He set out to find an official who could help him find James.

American soldiers wrote down James's name and promised to see what they could do. The base was already crowded with thousands of newly arrived people trying to make contact with loved ones. Mohammad and others found

learned James had been rescued. He called right away. "Mommy...Daddy," was all his son could say through his tears. Mohammad cried, too. "Talk to your mom, tell her you're OK," he told James. Bibi sobbed when she heard her son's voice.

Mohammad was afraid to let friends in Kabul know that James was still there. He had heard stories of armed groups kidnapping and torturing children to extort their parents.

get James. He learned that he faced the same dilemma he experienced the first time around in Kabul. If he left, he wouldn't be allowed to return.

His frustration was shared among thousands of families separated during the evacuation of more than 100,000 Afghans from Kabul last summer.

More than 1,500 Afghan children arrived in the U.S. without a parent, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Federal data



Inside the C-17 transport plane that ferried Mohammad, Bibi and their infant son from Kabul on Aug. 28 last year.

MOHAMMAD

OPINION

THE WEEKEND INTERVIEW with Fred Smith | By Tunku Varadarajan

For FedEx's Founder, the Sky Is Still the Limit

In March 2020, at age 75, Fred Smith should have been winding down his legendary career as CEO of FedEx.

Then Covid-19 hit, everyone's life turned upside down, and the company he founded had to save the world—"literally," he says, with no small amount of passion.

"We, and UPS, and to a lesser degree the Postal Service and a company called DHL, literally kept the world operating," Mr. Smith declares. "I don't think that what our people did is understood or appreciated nearly to the extent it should be."

The people he refers to are the 560,000 FedEx employees in 220 countries. "The pandemic created demand that our folks—and it certainly wasn't me!—heroically met." A photo that ran on the front page of the New York Times in March 2020 shows an eerily deserted Wall Street with the lone figure of a FedEx delivery man going about his business. "It was an iconic image," Mr. Smith says.

Mr. Smith founded FedEx in 1973 with a handful of converted Dassault Falcon 20 business jets—each one "about as big as one of the engines" on the Boeing 777s in the FedEx fleet today. Now 77, he's stepping down as CEO on June 1, though he'll stay on as chairman. My plan at his company headquarters in Memphis is to ask about lessons learned over his career.

He reflects on logistics, economics and lessons from building 'the largest transportation system ever put on the planet.'

But Mr. Smith is having none of it. He's fired up about the here and now, and our talk turns to Covid. Mr. Smith bristles at my suggestion—prompted by his assertion that "we'll pass \$100 billion in revenues next year"—that the pandemic has been good for FedEx. "I don't think anything that's taken a million people's lives . . ." he says before trailing off in silent indignation. Covid might have been "good in terms of creating some demand, but boy, societally, it has been very bad."

"I'm not getting on my high horse here, but I'm going to make a point," he continues. "My best friend died of it, a physician. One of our daughters was a nurse in the Navy Reserve. They called her up from her unit and she was sent to New York." Her commander dispatched her to Elmhurst Hospital Center in the New York borough of Queens, often described as Covid's Ground Zero in the U.S. "She was walking across body bags."

Among FedEx's contributions in the pandemic, Mr. Smith points to its keeping "people supplied at home and the healthcare and industrial supply chains open." He highlights the distribution of personal protective equipment and Covid vaccines. "What people don't know is that we had 900 employees in Wuhan, and they didn't have enough PPE." FedEx flew 777s bearing PPE across the Pacific

more than 1,000 times in the early months of 2020. "Within weeks, the problem went away." Then came the miracles from Moderna and Pfizer: "There are only two networks that could deliver the vaccines—us and UPS. And we did tens of millions, at 99-plus accuracy. It was just unbelievable." (Other companies, including United Airlines and DHL, moved vaccines as well.)

He pivots to the present and China's latest Covid surge. "By the way," he says, "our people are sleeping in sleeping bags by the hundreds in the Shanghai FedEx facility, to keep the economy of the world going as we speak."

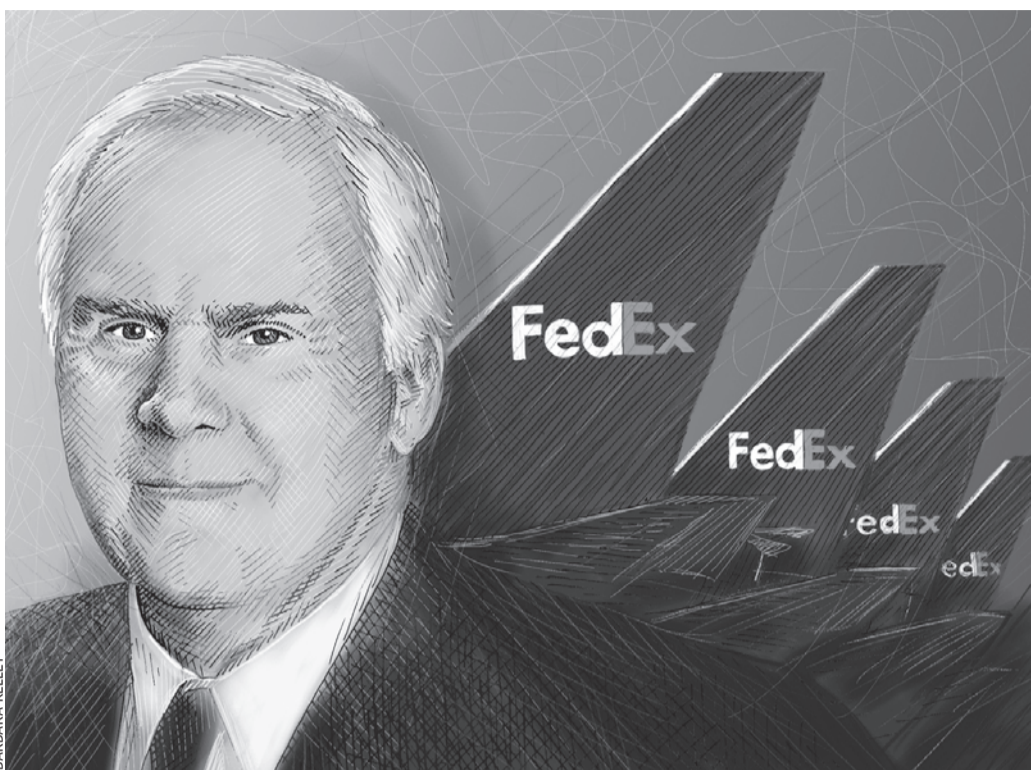
Mr. Smith wants to make clear that none of this was easy. Congress's last Covid relief stimulus "created an enormous amount of withdrawal of labor from the market," and that had a direct impact: "People make the supply chain this arcane subject. Hell, it was a lack of people to off-load trucks, and of people to drive the trucks." There wasn't "a big problem going through those ports out there. They weren't even working three shifts. It's simple: you couldn't move it once it got ashore."

If this seems a labor-centric view of the supply-chain crisis, it's attributable to his experience. In summer 2021, he says, "we were 40,000 package-handlers short, and there were people in the media saying that the stimulus checks didn't have anything to do with that." Such people are "divorced from the world we're living in." FedEx made up the shortfall by December: "It took a lot of effort." Mr. Smith concedes that large numbers of people may simply have decided not to work for fear of the pandemic. But "if I'm getting a government check," he says, there's less incentive to "go into a warehouse."

He's alarmed by President Biden's economic policies. "Had we passed the Build Back Better bill that Biden wanted, my guess is that we would be Weimar Germany right now," he says. "We'd have 25% inflation rather than 9% or 10%." Sens. Kyrsten Sinema and Joe Manchin, the Democrats who stymied the bill, were "like the Dutch kid with the finger in the dike."

In the same vein, he tells me he thinks modern monetary theory—which holds that federal spending ought not to be constrained by revenue—is "insane." You can't "print money without regard to the fundamental laws of economics."

In his view, one of the problems with our political discourse is "the isms. People talk about capitalism and socialism and communism. There's only two kinds of economic systems: the market-driven and the government-directed. That's it! The more you



BARBARA KELLEY

move toward a state-directed economy, the less efficient and more corrupt it becomes."

The history of FedEx tracks the history of deregulation in U.S. transportation. Mr. Smith's entrepreneurial story begins at Yale, from which he graduated in 1966. A flier who helped revive the storied Yale Flying Club—which had given America some of its finest pilots in World War I—he earned money as an undergraduate ferrying parcels by air for clients.

"These nascent technology companies—Burroughs, Xerox, IBM and so forth—would hire an entire airplane and a pilot to move a little bitty package around." He cups his hands together to show how small his cargo sometimes was.

After two tours in Vietnam with the Marine Corps, he got his tiny company off the ground in 1973. His regulatory fights, Mr. Smith says, were as important as the establishment of his business model. America's skies were a maze of regulations, and his earliest Dassault planes were small enough to evade most of them. "But there was so much demand," he chuckles, "that we quickly outgrew the plane, and that's why the deregulation of air transport was so important to us."

The reform of U.S. transportation is "one of the most unremarked success stories of the 20th century." And Mr. Smith wants credit to go to the oft-derided Jimmy Carter. "He started it all." In rapid order, Mr. Smith lists the market-liberalizing laws that helped FedEx to flourish: the deregulation of air cargo in 1977, which let FedEx introduce its first Boeing jets, passenger air services a year later, and interstate truck and rail transportation in 1980; then the federal pre-emption of interstate trucking rules in 1994. Two bastions of red tape—the Civil Aeronautics Board and Interstate Commerce Commission—were abolished. International aviation, which governments had tightly controlled, opened up. "In 1992, the U.S. and the Netherlands enacted the first of many Open Skies

agreements," Mr. Smith says.

Today, FedEx can fly almost everywhere. FedEx is now "the largest transportation system ever put on the planet." Its 689 planes fly out of 650 airports, and its motor-vehicle fleet exceeds 200,000.

In addition to being a lifelong—and self-described—fiscal conservative, Mr. Smith describes himself as a "social liberal" and "international realist." His favorite American politician is Sen. Tim Scott, a South Carolina Republican, who Mr. Smith believes would make a fine president: "He has life experience—came up a working person from a disadvantaged category. He's intellectually very sound. I have no idea whether he's even interested in running, but he's exactly the philosophy that I am."

In explaining his own social liberalism, Mr. Smith points out that "we, years ago, basically approved benefits for our gay employees." FedEx, he says, is "committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and opportunity." He offers to bet me that I haven't "talked to a CEO in a long time who has three African-Americans on their board, four minorities, and four women" out of 12. "We don't get any credit."

One of the minority board members, Mr. Smith notes, is Raj Subramaniam, FedEx's president and CEO-elect. "He's an Indian," Mr. Smith says, while observing in jest that "Indian-Americans control the whole economy. You got Satya Nadella"—Microsoft's CEO—"you got the head of Adobe, the head of IBM. I could keep going. It's the damnedest thing that I ever saw." When I press him to explain, he resorts to an answer that skirts the boundaries of our race-fraught times: "It's pretty self-evident. You have certain cultures where you have family focused on high achievement and academic success, particularly with two parents."

Free trade is Mr. Smith's greatest passion. Trade, he says, has enabled the U.S. to be the only global power in human history to get rich while also enabling the rest of the world to prosper. In his view, the neglect of U.S. industry in favor of

the financial and tech sectors—for which successive administrations in Washington are culpable—has led to a spike in populism that casts global trade as a villain.

Chinese "mercantilism" hasn't helped: "You can't pretend that a mercantilist state like China is a free trader. It's not." He'd like a "coalition of the willing" of free-trade states to challenge the Chinese at every opportunity. For his part, he'd like to have a chat with Xi Jinping. "I know President Xi. I met him when he was the party head down in the eastern part of China. If I had a conversation here today, I'd say, 'Mr. President'—just as I did with Trump—I strongly advise you

to re-embrace open markets, which made you rich."

He was particularly dismayed in 2016, when both Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton turned against the Trans-Pacific Partnership. He'd like the U.S. to resume global leadership on free trade, and sees such a move as the modern-day equivalent of the Marshall Plan, one which would allow countries to prosper, "not beggar each other."

The plan takes the name of George Marshall, whom Mr. Smith admires more than any other statesman. The Army's chief of staff during World War II, he was also President Harry S. Truman's secretary of state and later of defense. "My father died when I was 4," Mr. Smith says. "As I grew up I searched for role models in all the history I read. And I've tried to model my life on Marshall's leadership."

What Mr. Smith liked most about Marshall, he says, was that he was "unassuming, and wasn't interested in self-aggrandizement, the way, say, MacArthur was. In a way, I'd say, Marshall was the best president we never had."

As doyen of American CEOs, Mr. Smith has a view from the pinnacle of U.S. business that scarcely anyone can match. After nearly 50 years at the helm of FedEx, he can remember times when American political discourse wasn't "this balkanized electronic thing, where no one compromises." His service with the Marines left him with the enduring belief that his country is a force for good—and that a Pax Americana is part of the natural global order. This American peace, he believes, is about more than just preventing war. "It means trade as much as you can and make the world open for commerce. Trade helped to lift 600 million Chinese out of abject poverty. Somebody's got to defend it."

Mr. Varadarajan, a Journal contributor, is a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and at New York University Law School's Classical Liberal Institute.

Who Burned Down the Sculpture of Xi Jinping at a California Park?



CROSS COUNTRY
By James Kirchick

Yermo, Calif. The roadside attraction is an American invention, and none could be more quintessentially American than the one abutting the northbound lane of Interstate 15, smack dab in the middle of the Mojave Desert. Liberty Statue Park is an open-air memorial to the human desire for freedom. Located on a 36-acre tract, it was founded in 2017 by Chinese-born dissident artist Weiming Chen. The first sculpture Mr. Chen, 66, made for the space was a 15-foot-high bust of the Native American warrior Crazy Horse. In 2018 Mr. Chen added a statue of Li Wangyang, a Chinese labor activist who died under mysterious circumstances in 2012.

The following year, he created the world's largest monument to the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre. The sculpture stands atop a bronze-relief mural depicting scenes from June 4, 1989, when the Chinese government brutally suppressed a peaceful pro-democracy demonstration in the heart of Beijing. Another statue, "Tank Man," is a life-size portrayal of the moment

an unidentified man holding a briefcase defiantly stared down a column of tanks at Tiananmen.

On June 4, 2021, Mr. Chen added his most provocative piece. "CCP Virus" was an arrestingly macabre bust of Xi Jinping, depicting the Chinese Communist Party chief's head as a giant coronavirus molecule. The next month, the fiberglass statue was burned to the ground. Mr. Chen didn't hesitate to assign blame. "Something like this is not a personal action but a Chinese government action against us and the American system of free speech," he said in a statement to the press. "They want the truth about the origins of the COVID-19 virus to be hidden from the world."

In February I paid a visit to Liberty Sculpture Park, where a handmade "No Communists Allowed" sign marks the entrance. After a personal tour, I accompanied Mr. Chen and some of his fellow Chinese-born dissident activists for dinner at Peggy Sue's Diner, a kitschy eatery adjoining the park. With its Elvis statues, Marilyn Monroe posters and other tchotchkes of midcentury Americana, it was the perfect setting for a lesson in the importance of democracy from people who understand its preciousness all too well.

As we waited for our meatloaf and chicken-fried steak, with Neil

Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" playing, Mr. Chen and his comrades bemoaned America's fecklessness in the face of mounting Chinese repression at home and aggression abroad. Had I seen Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a longtime advocate of democracy in China, warn U.S. Olympians not to offend their Communist hosts with protests over human rights? Could one imagine her issuing a similar rebuke to National Football League players protesting on behalf of Black Lives Matter?

Federal prosecutors say Weiming Chen's 'CCP Virus' was destroyed by men working for China.

Jonas Yuan, 33, serves as the park's official photographer. He told me that unless America is willing to stand up to China, "We will be the last generation to know freedom." Mr. Yuan is willing to put his own body on the line, proudly displaying a photograph of himself and Mr. Chen on an armed night patrol of the park to protect it from further vandalism. After dinner, Mr. Chen brought me to his studio, where we were greeted by his dogs, appropriately named

"Freedom" and "Fighter."

Last month federal prosecutors unsealed charges against five men, accusing them of acting on behalf of the Chinese Ministry of State Security to "stalk, harass, and spy on" Chinese-born dissidents living in the U.S. According to communications revealed in the complaint, Matthew Ziburis, a former Florida corrections officer, conspired with Fan "Frank" Liu, president of a "purported media organization" in New York, and Qiang "Jason" Sun, a Chinese employee of an "international technology company," to ruin Mr. Chen's statues.

Last year, according to the complaint, Mr. Liu instructed Mr. Ziburis to approach Mr. Chen and tell him that he represented a "very rich Jewish man & head of Jewish community" who was a generous donor to the Democratic Party and "especially Nancy Pelosi." Mr. Ziburis allegedly convinced Mr. Chen to let him install security cameras in his studio to "protect his investment," in Mr. Yuan's words.

Although the alleged conspirators didn't initially plan to raze Mr. Chen's statue, prosecutors say their plans changed. According to the complaint, Mr. Sun ordered Mr. Liu to destroy "all sculptures and things that are not good to our leaders." They also allegedly tried bribing an Internal Revenue Service

employee to obtain Mr. Chen's tax returns. "After obtaining evidence, spend money for court and attorney fees to totally get rid of him," Mr. Liu allegedly told Mr. Sun. According to the U.S. attorney's office in New York's Eastern District, where the complaint was unsealed, Messrs. Ziburis and Liu are free on bail and engaged in plea negotiations. Mr. Sun remains at large.

I called Mr. Chen a few hours after the charges were unsealed. He was several glasses deep into a celebratory bottle of champagne. "They want to destroy American free speech and freedom in the arts and the free media," he says of the regime that incinerated his sculpture. "It's a very great danger." I ask Mr. Chen if he felt a yearning to assist Ukrainians in their struggle for freedom. "I would very much like to help, but now there's so much work at the Liberty Sculpture Park," he says. "If I fly to Ukraine, maybe my park will be destroyed."

With the support of the New York-based Human Rights Foundation, Mr. Chen hopes to unveil a recreation of the destroyed "CCP Virus" statue in a few months. This one won't be fiberglass. It will be made of steel.

Mr. Kirchick is author of "Secret City: The Hidden History of Gay Washington," out next month.

OPINION

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

California's French Workweek

The popular book "The 4-Hour Workweek" provides tips on how to make more money by working less. Now California Democrats are taking a page from the book by proposing to mandate a four-day week, which would require businesses to pay employees the same wages for less work. As labor economics goes, this is up there with paying people not to work and expecting more people to work.

A bill moving through the Legislature would shorten California's normal workweek to 32 hours from 40 for companies with more than 500 employees. Workers who put in more than 32 hours in a week would have to be paid time-and-a-half. And get this: Employers would be prohibited from reducing workers' current pay rate, so they would be paid the same for working 20% less.

Democrats say a shorter workweek will help businesses retain burned-out workers and increase productivity and profits. "There has been no correlation between working more hours and better productivity," Assemblywoman Cristina Garcia says. Do Democrats really think Tesla workers can assemble as many cars in 32 hours as they do in 40?

Many employers, especially in white-collar professions, have begun to offer flexible hours and work arrangements. Some have noticed diminishing returns on labor output whereby workers after a certain point produce less the longer they work. If companies think reducing hours will improve employee morale, productivity and profits, they will do it.

Liberals cite Microsoft's experiment with a four-day workweek in Japan, which reportedly improved productivity by 40%. But Microsoft also made other changes to boost productivity, including shorter meetings. (The next mandate: No more than two zoom calls a day!) A four-day week might work for tech companies, but it probably won't for most businesses. Got a med-

ical emergency? Sorry, Friday is the new Saturday at hospitals.

Employers have fixed costs in training and overhead, so reducing work hours raises the marginal cost of each worker. A 32-hour week means employers will have to hire more employees at a higher overall cost to do the same amount of work. Or they'll have to pay overtime. Or they'll simply do less business. Most companies will pass on increased costs to customers, including Americans in other states. Workers will have more leisure but at the cost of less efficiency and a lower standard of living.

As is often the case with bad economic ideas, France enshrined a 35-hour workweek in 2000. The thinking was that by forcing everyone to work less, more people would be hired. But it hasn't turned out that way, as French unemployment remains high. Most advanced economies have a 40-hour workweek. The U.K. doesn't even have a legal limit.

Supporters say the 32-hour workweek is no big deal because it would apply only to employers with more than 500 workers. But those companies employ more than half of California's workers, and small businesses they contract with could eventually be swept in under the state's joint-employer doctrine.

While the bill may not pass immediately, California is an incubator of progressive ideas that are often taken up by Democrats elsewhere. Single-payer healthcare, a millionaire's tax, and climate cap and trade all started in Sacramento. And sure enough, California Rep. Mark Takano has already introduced a bill to mandate a 32-hour workweek nationwide.

Why do progressives think any idea they come up with has to be imposed by political coercion? You know the answer. Because they believe in their superior moral virtue, and they like to order other people around.

Democrats think a 32-hour week will improve productivity. Sure.

Kentucky's Tax Turnaround

The state budget season continues to pay off for taxpayers, and Kentucky's sharp turnaround shows the strength of the trend. The same Legislature that fought to preserve income taxes four years ago overrode the Governor to cut rates this week.

Kentucky's House and Senate voted Wednesday to override the veto of Democratic Gov. Andy Beshear and enact the tax reform they passed last month. The plan reduces the state's flat income-tax rate to 4.5% from 5% in 2023 and creates a trigger for more cuts down the line. Automatic 0.5-point rate cuts will kick in each year that state reserves hold up and revenue exceeds spending.

It's the latest example of a state making responsible use of a two-year budget windfall, committing to leave money in the private economy. Kentucky's balanced-budget amendment made the move even more urgent because periods of tighter revenue foreclose the possibility of tax cuts. Reducing the income tax for all Kentuckians will go far in a state that ranks 44th in median household earnings, and which has lagged behind neighbors in recent job growth. The first cut next year will return about \$550 million to the economy.

Gov. Beshear rarely spares the veto pen—the tax reform was among 25 bills he sent back to the GOP-controlled Legislature this year. Still, Kentucky Democrats may regret aligning themselves against the tax reform.

Rate cuts are coming despite past reluctance in both parties.

Like most others, the Bluegrass State has run large surpluses in the past two years, and its rainy-day fund currently equals about 14% of annual revenue. Mr. Beshear pledged in January to foster a "vibrant, diverse economy that can support our workforce in the face of whatever challenges arise." His veto of a restrained, incremental tax cut shows he's more concerned with preserving spending.

The tax cut's success also highlights the progress of Kentucky Republicans. It's been four years since former GOP Gov. Matt Bevin proposed a path to end the income tax, only to be overridden by his own party in the Legislature. The revenue surge has made it easier to cut taxes, though the balanced-budget requirement would have helped Republicans rein in spending had they embraced the steeper cuts earlier.

Intensifying tax competition was likely another factor in the political turnaround. Kentucky shares its longest border with Tennessee, which boasts no income tax and has outpaced its northern neighbor in manufacturing growth. Ohio cut its top rate on income to 4.99% last year, and Indiana last month put its top rate on a downward path to 2.9% over seven years.

After the bill's passage, state Rep. Steven Rudy told the press "I think we'll be able to budget to our needs still and put money back into the pockets of Kentucky residents." It's a simple idea, and taxpayers everywhere can be glad that more states are catching on.

The Eternal Covid Emergency

The Covid emergency is over thanks mainly to vaccines and therapies. Yet Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra on Wednesday extended the national public-health emergency for another 90 days. Why? Because permanent crisis means more dependence on government.

The Trump Administration invoked the emergency under the Public Health Service Act on Jan. 31, 2020 to reduce red tape for health-care providers. But then Congress linked an expansion of Medicaid and food stamps to the declaration. Now progressives don't want the emergency to end.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act of March 2020 suspended food-stamp work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents during the emergency. Congress also boosted benefits, so the average monthly payment is now double (\$240 per person) what it was in 2019.

Suspending work requirements was intended to help workers laid off during lockdowns when few jobs were available. But once lockdowns eased, businesses were desperate to hire. The sweetened food stamps and suspended work-requirement—on top of enhanced unemployment benefits and other transfer payments—reduced the incentive to return to work.

Now there are 1.8 job openings for every unemployed worker, and the unemployment rate has fallen to near pre-pandemic levels. Yet as of January there were nearly 2.5 million more households receiving food stamps than in 2019 and 500,000 more than in April 2020. What's wrong with this picture?

States may end the supplemental food

stamps before the public-health emergency is lifted, but only a dozen or so have. Even GOP governors struggle to resist free federal money, and they fret about being attacked for refusing extra benefits amid rising food costs, even if beneficiaries aren't poor.

Congress also increased Medicaid funding for states during the emergency on the condition they don't remove beneficiaries from their rolls, even if they earn too much to qualify. Medicaid enrollment has swelled by more than 14.6 million (20%) since February 2020—more than gained coverage from ObamaCare.

A recent Journal of the American Medical Association study found that Wisconsin Medicaid enrollment increased 11.1% more than would be expected based on economic factors during the first seven months of the emergency, mostly because ineligible beneficiaries weren't kicked off. Some states now want to prune their rolls but can't without losing federal funds. Congress has hooked states on federal transfer payments, and Democrats want them to stay hooked.

The emergency rules have served some useful purposes, such as letting Medicare cover telehealth services and waiving a Medicare requirement that beneficiaries be hospitalized for three days before the cost of nursing-home care is covered. But the Administration can make some of those useful changes permanent by regulation and ask Congress to include those it can't in the mooted Covid spending bill.

The same bill is also a chance to override Mr. Becerra's declaration of what is becoming an eternal Covid emergency. Pandemic welfare shouldn't become endemic.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Middle Path of Conservatism in America

Barton Swaim's illuminating book review "Grumbles Left and Right" (April 9) highlights well the troubles plaguing contemporary conservatism. His comments on Yoram Hazony's "Conservatism: A Rediscovery" point to the author's rigid use of dichotomies to separate the wheat from the tares within American conservatism.

Readers of Mr. Hazony's earlier book on nationalism may recall a similar deployment of empires and nations as the sole way to think about political forms, excluding regime types like republicanism. In Mr. Hazony's telling, conservatism in the U.S. has been a contest between naked reason, which ends in deracinated individualism, and empirically minded traditionalism.

There is a middle way here missed by Mr. Hazony. We find it in the Declaration of Independence, which reasons from universal goods to particular problems—from man's equality under law to the crown's disparagement of the colonists' legal equality. Can we ever depart from articulating the good and the true, and applying it to discrete situations, and still have a humane politics?

The Founders, much less F.A. Hayek or Leo Strauss, were not attempting to become the gods of abstract reason. Our Declaration of Independence affirms, as both the God of the philosophers and the God of the Bible do, the dignity of the human person and his equality under law. This truth is self-evident and divinely revealed. Tocqueville observed that it took God to become man to reveal the person's fundamental equality with other persons.

Mr. Hazony, however, means to defend family, religion and nation, and his contributions in this regard are significant. But is his biblical traditionalism enough? Progressives now assert a Marxist identity politics that denies the equality of persons under the rule of law in favor of group rights of race and gender. This fundamentally illiberal doctrine must be defeated by a conservatism able to use reason and biblical anthropology. The American nation is at stake.

RICHARD M. REINSCH II
Senior fellow, Heritage Foundation
Westfield, Ind.

Protect Children and Keep the Internet Free

Peggy Noonan's proposal to ban everyone under 18 from all social-media sites ("Can Anyone Tame Big Tech?" Declarations, April 9) would turn every kid into an instant criminal for seeking access to information and culture on the dominant medium of their generation. I wonder how she would have felt about adults proposing to ban all kids from listening to TV or radio during her youth.

Let's work to empower parents to help them guide their children's digital experiences. Better online-safety and media-literacy efforts can prepare kids for a hyperconnected future. We can find workable solutions that wouldn't usher in unprecedented government control of speech.

ADAM THERIER
Mercatus Center
Arlington, Va.

When radio broadcasting first reached most people, it was much like the internet. Broadcasting was the Wild West, unlimited by regulation. Then, as we began to understand radio's tremendous power, the Communications Act of 1934 was passed. One person or corporation could hold only five radio licenses nationwide to insure the "multiplicity of voices" so that no one entity could control what people learned about the world.

Today, the internet is the Wild West. Those who hold the strings of power online are willfully censoring content, banning all things with which they disagree. This flies in the face of precedent with radio, on which Congress paved the way for open dialogue.

THOMAS O. MORGAN
Oviedo, Fla.

This Isn't Calvin Coolidge's Republican Party

Matthew Continetti is correct to say it is hard to think of two U.S. presidents with less in common than Calvin Coolidge and Donald Trump ("The Return of the Old American Right," Review, April 9). Coolidge was a man of the highest moral standards who defended the rule of law. He was a humble public servant who treated everyone with the utmost respect.

There's no comparison between the GOP's Trump wing and the conservatives of the 1920s. Coolidge believed in good government. He was honest above all. He improved public education and cut taxes, broadening economic prosperity and lifting the standard of living for the masses, all while delivering budget surpluses.

The Trump era has been littered with dishonesty. His tax policies contributed to the deepest economic divide since the Gilded Age. Even before Covid, annual deficits reversed their downward trend. These aren't the visions of the 1920s Republican Party.

Does Piketty Know Where Collectivism Leads Nations?

Regarding Tunku Varadarajan's review of Thomas Piketty's "A Brief History of Equality" (Books, April 9): The liberties of capitalism and the "revolts against injustice" have been complimentary grindstones to the honing of the "historical movement toward equality" that Mr. Piketty acknowledges. Collectivism, however, is another story.

The invisible hand may be no less naively utopian than collectivism. But when put into practice, one has resulted in unprecedented advancement. The other led to the death of over 40 million of the adopting nations' own citizens just last century.

JOHN C. RAMSEY
Carmel, Ind.

Racial Counting Post-McGirt

Regarding your editorial "The Case of the White Supremacist Choctaw" (April 12): 154 years after the three-fifths clause in the Constitution was repealed, it's hard to believe that fractions are still being used to determine a person's rights in America.

JIM LEMUNYON
Oak Hill, Va.

CORRECTION

The April 13 Politics & Ideas column misspelled the last name of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks.

Letters intended for publication should be emailed to wsj.letters@wsj.com. Please include your city, state and telephone number. All letters are subject to editing, and unpublished letters cannot be acknowledged.

Pepper ... And Salt

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL



"We're off the hook on methane."

OPINION

America's Most Tumultuous Holy Week



DECLARATIONS
By Peggy Noonan

It was the Easter of epochal events. All that Holy Week history came like a barrage. It was April 1865, the Civil War. No one touched by that war ever got over it; it was the signal historical event of their lives, the greatest national trauma in U.S. history. It would claim 750,000 lives.

Everyone knew the South would fight to the end, but suddenly people wondered if it was the end. Gen. Robert E. Lee's army was trapped and under siege in the middle of Virginia. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant was bearing down, his army going from strength to strength.

The two exchanged letters under flag of truce. Grant to Lee: Did the general not see the "hopelessness" of his position? Lee sent a roundabout response, Grant a roundabout reply, but he was starting to see: Lee knows he is beat.

On Palm Sunday, Robert E. Lee surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant. Lincoln was dead by Easter.

On the morning of April 9, Palm Sunday, Lee sent word: He would discuss terms of surrender. They met that afternoon in the Appomattox home of Wilmer McLean.

Lee got there first. Allen C. Guelzo, in his masterly "Robert E. Lee: A Life," quotes a reporter from the New York Herald who had joined a crowd outside. He was bowled over by the bearing of the imposing Lee, in full dress uniform with "an elegant sword, sash and gauntlets."

In truth, Lee didn't know what to expect. He'd told his staff, "If I am to be General Grant's prisoner to-day, I intend to make my best appearance." His close friend Gen. James

Longstreet thought Lee's fine dress a form of "emotional armor," an attempt to conceal "profound depression," according to Ron Chernow's superb, compendious "Grant."

Grant, who at 42 was 16 years Lee's junior, arrived a picture of dishevelment—slouched hat, common soldier's blouse, mud-splashed boots. He was painfully aware of how he looked and feared Lee would think him deliberately discourteous, Mr. Chernow writes. Later, historians would think he was making a political statement, but he'd simply outrun his supply lines: his dress uniform was in a trunk on a wagon somewhere.

But he projected authority. Joshua Chamberlain, hero of Gettysburg, wrote that he saw Grant trot by, "sitting his saddle with the ease of a born master. . . . He seemed greater than I had ever seen him,—a look as of another world around him."

The armies of the North and South, in blue and gray, were massed uneasily beyond the house. Neither Lee nor Grant wanted them to resume the fight. Some of Lee's officers had urged him not to surrender but to disband his army and let his men scatter to the hills and commence a guerrilla war. Lee had refused. The entire country would devolve into "lawless bands in every part," he wrote, and "a state of society would ensue from which it would take the country years to recover."

The generals sat in McLean's parlor and attempted conversation. But of course it is the surrender agreement, on whose terms they quickly agreed, that will be remembered forever. Lee's army would surrender and receive parole; weapons and supplies would be turned over as captured property. Officers would be allowed to keep their personal sidearms.

Lee suggested Confederate soldiers be allowed to take home a horse or mule for "planting a spring crop," Mr. Guelzo writes. Grant agreed, and Lee was overcome with



'Peace in Union' (1895) by Thomas Nast

relief. Lee then asked Grant for food for his troops. They had been living for 10 days on parched corn. Grant agreed again and asked how many rations were needed. "About 25,000," Lee said. Grant's commissary chief later asked, "Were such terms ever before given by a conqueror to a defeated foe?"

Grant asked his aide Ely Parker, an American Indian of the Seneca tribe, to make a fair copy of the surrender agreement. When Lee ventured, "I am glad to see one real American here." Parker memorably replied, "We are all Americans."

Grant would write in his memoirs "What General Lee's feelings were I do not know." His own feelings, which had earlier been jubilant, were now "sad and depressed." He couldn't rejoice at the downfall of a foe that had "suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse."

Now the door to the parlor was opened, and Grant's officers were introduced to Lee, including "a newly minted captain, Robert Todd Lincoln,

the twenty-one-year-old son of the president," Mr. Guelzo writes.

Grant and Lee shook hands; Lee stepped onto the porch and signaled his orderly for his horse. An Illinois cavalry officer, George Forsyth, remembered every Union officer on the porch "sprang to his feet . . . every hand . . . raised in military salute."

Lee looked to the east, where his army was in its last encampment. As he turned to leave, Grant came out to the steps and saluted him by raising his hat. Lee reciprocated and rode off slowly to break the news to the men he'd commanded. Mr. Guelzo: "He spoke briefly and simply, as to a theater company after its last curtain."

They had done their duty, Lee said: "Leave the result to God. Go to your homes and resume your occupations. Obey the laws and become as good citizens as you were soldiers."

Grant had something Lee didn't have. Lee couldn't act under instructions of his government because it had effectively collapsed when Richmond fell. Events had moved too

quickly for Grant to receive specific instruction from Washington, but he knew the president's mind. In the last year of the war he and Lincoln had become good friends, and in their conversations Grant had been struck by the president's "generous and kindly spirit toward the Southern people" and the absence of any "revengeful disposition."

Days before the surrender Lincoln had visited Grant's headquarters at City Point, Va. The president spent a day at a field hospital, where in "a tender spirit of reconciliation" he "shook hands with wounded confederates," in Mr. Chernow's words. A Northern colonel who described Lincoln as "the ugliest man I ever put my eyes on," with an "expression of plebeian vulgarity in his face," spoke with him and found "a very honest and kindly man" who was "highly intellectual."

The mercy shown at Appomattox is a kind of golden moment in American history, but history's barrage didn't stop. America exploded with excitement at the end of the war, and all Washington was lit with lights, flags, bunting.

On Good Friday, April 14, Lincoln met with his son Robert to hear of what he saw at Appomattox, and then with his cabinet, including Gen. Grant, where he happily backed up Grant's generosity. Grant, he said, had operated fully within his wishes. Lincoln was assassinated that night, died Saturday morning, and for a long time the next day would be called "black Easter."

But what is the meaning of Appomattox? What explains the wisdom and mercy shown? How does a nation do that, produce it?

As you see these past weeks, I have been back to my history books. You learn a lot that way, not only about the country and the world and "man," but even yourself. Would you have let your enemy go home in dignity, with the horses and guns? And not bring the law down on their heads? And the answer—what does that tell you about you?

Helping Ukraine Win Against Russia Is a Vital NATO Interest

By Paula Dobriansky
And Richard Levine

The West can't continue to pretend that a negotiated peace is possible in Ukraine. Not after Russia killed 57 civilians with a ballistic missile at the Kramatorsk train station. Any settlement could only legitimize Russia's control of Ukrainian land. That's unacceptable. Ukraine must be victorious, and any instrument of peace should document this fact.

In war, geography determines tactics. Fighting in urban areas conveyed important advantages to Ukrainian forces. Small, highly mobile groups, armed with man-portable antitank and anti-aircraft weapons, inflicted grievous losses on Russia. Deprived of his conquest of Kyiv, Vladimir Putin seems poised to fight two battles. One is in the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine; the other seeks to establish a permanent land bridge to Crimea and thus deny Ukraine access to the Sea of Azov. The Donbas is composed of the energy-rich Donetsk

and Luhansk oblasts. Mr. Putin would love to get his hands on their natural gas and coal reserves. Both areas are predominantly Russian-speaking and contain self-described breakaway republics.

If Ukraine is to challenge Russia for control of the Donbas, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization must provide Kyiv with main battle tanks, tracked howitzers, multiple-launch rocket systems, infantry fighting vehicles and armored troop carriers. The Czech Republic has transferred Soviet-era fighting vehicles and tanks to Ukraine. This is an important demonstration of solidarity, but this equipment was designed in the 1960s and is antiquated.

NATO should proceed in phases. First, send into Ukraine heavy weapons that can be immediately adopted by Ukrainian forces, with little or no training. Next, provide Western-designed armored equipment as soon as possible, along with training packages that will allow Ukraine to deploy the new weapons quickly. American or British tanks, with composite armor

and superior targeting systems, will be vital if the war becomes protracted.

Integrated land and air operations will be crucial if Ukraine is to win. Reconnaissance drones are useful, but fighter aircraft are essential. The Ukrainians need fighters like the Mikoyan MiG-29 or other fourth-generation aircraft,

Here are steps the West can take to avoid peace compromises that would legitimize Putin's crimes.

and they need them now. The official U.S. position is that MiG-29s can't fly directly to Ukraine from NATO bases in Germany. To get around this, NATO must find ways to move these fighters into the country using decoys and electronic deception to prevent the Russians from figuring out their points of departure.

Additional antiship missiles like the American-made Harpoon will be necessary to prevent the Kremlin from establishing the land bridge it desires. The Russian navy can't be allowed to use the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov to assault the cities and ports that dot Ukraine's coast. Neither can Moscow be allowed to unload troops and equipment.

Faced with staggering losses, Russia has resorted to attacks on civilians. Ukraine needs a defense against medium-range ballistic missiles such as the one used on Kramatorsk. Depending on its configuration, the S-300 surface-to-air missile system may not be up to the task. U.S.-made Patriot batteries can intercept ballistic missiles. Over shorter ranges, the SAMP/T air-defense system, which is used by France and Italy, can also accomplish this job.

Mr. Putin's barbarism is intended to demoralize Ukraine's population. NATO must increase its humanitarian aid immediately. The U.S. Navy's Sealift Command should sail America's two hospital ships to the re-

gion, perhaps docking them in Romania. Each of these vessels has 1,000 beds and is guarded from attack by international conventions to which Russia is a party. These ships would provide medical care to Russian prisoners of war in addition to Ukrainians.

The West shares with Ukraine a conception of liberty that isn't based on race or heritage but inalienable rights. No tyrannical force must ever be allowed to destroy this profound link. Mr. Putin invaded Ukraine with the goal of erasing the identity of its people, much as Joseph Stalin hoped to do in 1932-33, when he murdered as many as 10 million Ukrainians through starvation in the atrocity known as the Holodomor. Such horror defined the last century. It can't be allowed to define this one.

Ms. Dobriansky served as undersecretary of state for global affairs, 2001-09. Mr. Levine served as the first deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for technology transfer and security assistance, 1986-88.

Why the Ukraine War Hasn't Crashed the Stock Market



BUSINESS WORLD
By Holman W. Jenkins, Jr.

The stock market, so far, has largely recapitulated its pattern from past wars: sell the rumor, buy the news. The S&P 500 hit a recent low on Feb. 23, the day before Russia's invasion. It's up 167 points since then.

To paraphrase JP Morgan banker Jamie Dimon's advice to investors and analysts this week, everything looks pretty good except the possibility that something really bad could happen. The stock market, so far, has largely recapitulated its pattern from past wars: sell the rumor, buy the news. The S&P 500 hit a recent low on Feb. 23, the day before Russia's invasion. It's up 167 points since then.

A Canadian fund manager made news by advising his investors to keep buying stocks because in an all-out nuclear war their portfolio allocation would be irrelevant anyway. Looking back and trying to explain a modest 7% drop during the Cuban missile crisis, economists reached for a similar explanation: There's no point discounting a worst-case outcome because nobody will be around to benefit from a wise investment decision.

Fritz Todt, who built the autobahn, told Hitler in November 1941 the war could not be won and must be ended politically. Hitler responded: "I can scarcely still see a way of coming politically to an end." The führer was talking his book.

Negotiated endings are always on the cards, as they now could be for Vladimir Putin. There was no "existential" risk for Germany. Even under the rigorous terms actually imposed—unconditional surrender—Germany survived and quickly was on its way to becoming the leading state in Europe. The "existential" risk belonged to Hitler; under any settlement that might be envisaged, he would have had to leave power and accept accountability for his crimes.

Mr. Putin, in astonishingly short order, has turned his Ukraine lark into a similar risk not for Russia but for Mr. Putin. Hence a heating up of the rhetoric recently. RIA Novosti, an official Moscow news service, issued a bloodcurdling call for the liquidation of Ukraine. Sergey Karaganov, a leading Putin intellectual, told a Western interviewer, "The stakes of the Russian elite are very high—for them it is an existential war," and gave voice to a hail Mary scenario in which nuclear threats cause the U.S. to abandon NATO.

And despite Washington having supplied Ukraine's military for years, a démarche this week from the Russian Embassy demands the U.S. stop and warns of "unpredictable consequences."

I first mentioned the Hitler-Todt episode in this column in 2014, in anticipation of Mr. Putin bringing the world to such moment. It is difficult not to imagine him now fingering his weapons of mass de-

struction, particularly his tactical nuclear warheads, and wondering if they might offer a way out of his dilemma—a concern publicly aired this week by CIA Director William Burns.

Only one answer would seem to fit the situation: a clear signal to Mr. Putin that, in such a case, NATO airpower will join the war on Ukraine's side and reduce most of his standing

All the investment signals say Vladimir Putin can't possibly emerge victorious.

army to a smoldering wreck. Where the decisive ground battle is now shaping up in eastern Ukraine, the open terrain is especially conducive to such an aerial campaign.

The logic of preserving his army to fight another day will be hard for Mr. Putin to ignore if he hopes to stay in his job. Seven weeks of war have also been useful: He and his domestic allies have had a chance to wrap their heads around the possibility of defeat. For his colleagues, moreover, an easy decision is not to see everything they value destroyed for the sake of a man they've come to loathe personally.

One way or another, the U.S. is likely to find itself moving closer to center stage in the conflict and its

endgame. Germany and others resist cutting Mr. Putin's vital energy dollars not just out of concern for their own economies; they don't crave the risks and uncertainties that come with making Mr. Putin's position in Moscow terminally untenable. Probably Mr. Biden's advisers, except a few militants, agree. And if anything can get China's Xi Jinping off the sidelines and working with the U.S. and Europe in Ukraine, it will be a desire not to see Mr. Putin humiliated.

Only the Ukrainians themselves, having experienced Russian occupation and seen that it means acquiescing in the mass murder of civilians, are a likely voice of realism and spine-stiffening. Lately recalled have been JFK's words about the necessity of leaving Khrushchev an exit route. In Mr. Putin's case, the advice is too late. With his blunders and miscalculations, his survival is now in his own hands; he has left the allies nothing to work with. Joe Biden's alleged rhetorical excesses may be all that—calling Mr. Putin a war criminal, referring to genocide (not an unreasonable interpretation of recent Russian rhetoric), saying Mr. Putin should not remain in power.

My guess is these out-of-school expostulations pop out for a reason—because the consensus after so many hours of White House discussion is that Mr. Putin is likely beyond saving no matter what the U.S. does.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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SPORTS

The NBA Went Smaller. The Biggest Players Got Better.

Kevin Durant, Joel Embiid, Nikola Jokic and Giannis Antetokounmpo are basketball's most dominant forces. Their games are nothing alike.

By Ben Cohen

The best players in the NBA this season were three very large men from three different countries, Nikola Jokic, Joel Embiid and Giannis Antetokounmpo, and even they might admit the best player in the world as the playoffs begin this weekend is Kevin Durant.

But there is something odd about the game's biggest stars: Their games are nothing alike.

They happen to be about the same height, but at no other time in the history of the NBA have 7-footers been so remarkably dissimilar.

Even the stories of how they got to the league have little in common. Durant was the greatest American player of his era. Embiid was a volleyball player in Cameroon. Jokic was a pudgy kid in Serbia. Antetokounmpo was a scrawny teen in Greece. But together these four players standing about 28 feet tall have cast a long shadow over the league. They are still the most dominant forces in a sport where simply being larger than everyone is no longer enough to dominate.

At a time when the big man risked becoming an endangered species, Jokic, Embiid, Durant and Antetokounmpo are making Darwin proud as living proof of basketball adaptation.

"I believe in evolution," says NBA legend Bill Walton. "These really incredible players who have capitalized and used and leveraged every possible advantage that today's athletes have in terms of training and conditioning and nutrition and science and medicine and equipment and court surface and ball quality and the technology. Everything that goes into making today better than yesterday. I believe in all this stuff."

It would be difficult to watch the NBA and believe otherwise.

The first thing anyone sees when they look at these players is their size, but the most striking part about today's big men is their collection of skills. The mobility, nimbleness and versatility they flaunt on a nightly basis is nothing less than mind-boggling to the few people on the planet who see eye-to-eye with them.

"I come from an era where that was unheard of," said Alaa Abdelnaby, an NBA player in the 1990s who now has a front-row seat to Embiid's theatrics as a Philadelphia 76ers broadcaster. "That package was beyond anyone's comprehension when I was in the league."

Even basketball stats these days are subject to inflation, but their numbers this season were staggering. Jokic registered the highest player-efficiency rating of all time, surpassing the mark previously set by Antetokounmpo, who also broke his own record. Embiid, meanwhile, became the first center since Shaquille O'Neal in 2000 to win the scoring title.



and horizontally. "They're basketball players who happen to be big," Walton says, "as opposed to big guys who are trying to play basketball."

But the great irony of big men reasserting their supremacy is that the 3-point line was designed to blunt their genetic advantages.

The NBA was looking for ways to electrify the game and diversify its talent pool when it dropped a strip of paint on the court that would change basketball forever. Before the existence of this arc, it didn't make sense for them to drift from the paint, the most efficient part of the court. Now they had a powerful mathematical incentive. In every season between 1965 and 1980, the MVP of the league was a center. But in the four decades since the line was introduced, especially the last one, the game shifted away from the basket and out of their control.

This could have been an event of mass extinction for the giants roaming the basketball earth unless they adapted in order to survive. But they did. It would take a generation or two for big men to have the freedom to be anyone they wanted.

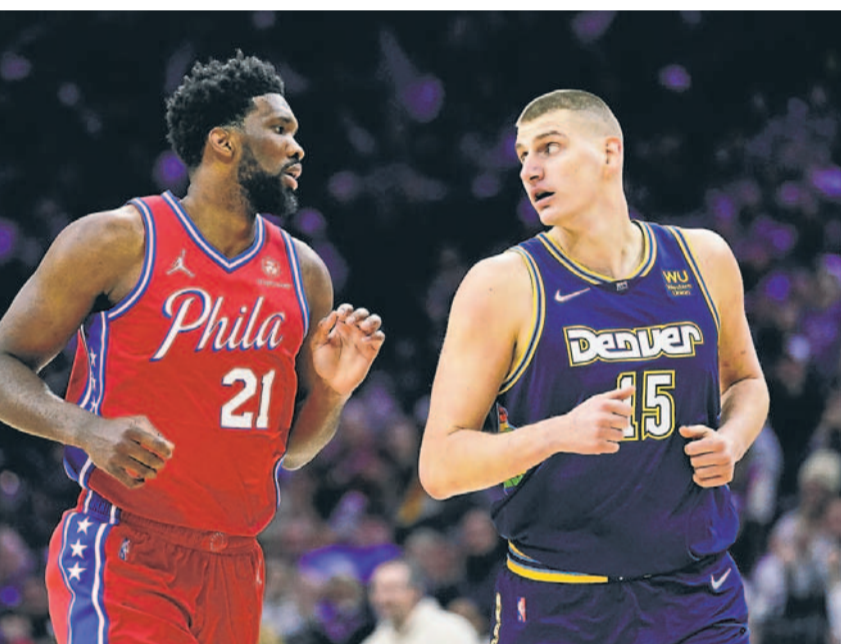
"For guys of my era, I always think: What would it have been like if you grew up and were told you could do everything?" says former NBA center Chris Dudley.

One of the bizarre things about the way basketball talent is recognized, developed and rewarded is that despite all the money, resources and data poured into valuations, even the brightest minds can get the best players wrong. It's a humbling business that requires making predictions based on projecting how teenagers might behave a decade later. The market that exists to identify future talent is deeply inefficient almost by definition.

But it's especially tricky to figure out how any big man might fit into today's NBA because their job requirements keep shifting.

They are no longer confined by their position. They're redefining it.

"These guys don't live under those restrictions or limitations," Walton said. "One of the endlessly beautiful things about basketball is that it's an extension of the creativity and imagination that comes from a fertile mind. We are witnessing that right now in the way these guys play."



Above, Kevin Durant and Giannis Antetokounmpo could meet in the playoffs again. Left, Joel Embiid and Nikola Jokic are MVP candidates.

Chamberlain and O'Neal, but Chamberlain's career-high at the line was 61% and O'Neal made 51% in the year he took the most foul shots. Embiid is an 81% shooter.

There's someone else a few thousand miles away doing things nobody has seen before. Jokic led the Nuggets in points, rebounds, assists, steals and blocks while functioning as Denver's center, point guard and basically every position in between. The whole team would fall apart without him. In fact, it does. The Nuggets won Jokic's minutes by 8.4 points per 100 possessions and managed to lose the minutes he was on the bench by 7.9 points. That gap in net rating was easily the widest margin in the league.

Jokic and Embiid will likely finish atop MVP ballots for the second year in a row, and most NBA general managers would still prefer to have Antetokounmpo attacking the hoop or Durant doing anything he wants in the playoffs, but they can't go wrong with any of them. What makes them so dangerous is they don't just score over people. They also create ways to score around them. They can beat you vertically

Which one of these international stars deserves the MVP award is the battleground of NBA podcasts, but far more interesting than the marginal discrepancies in their statistical cases are the massive differences in the way they do their jobs.

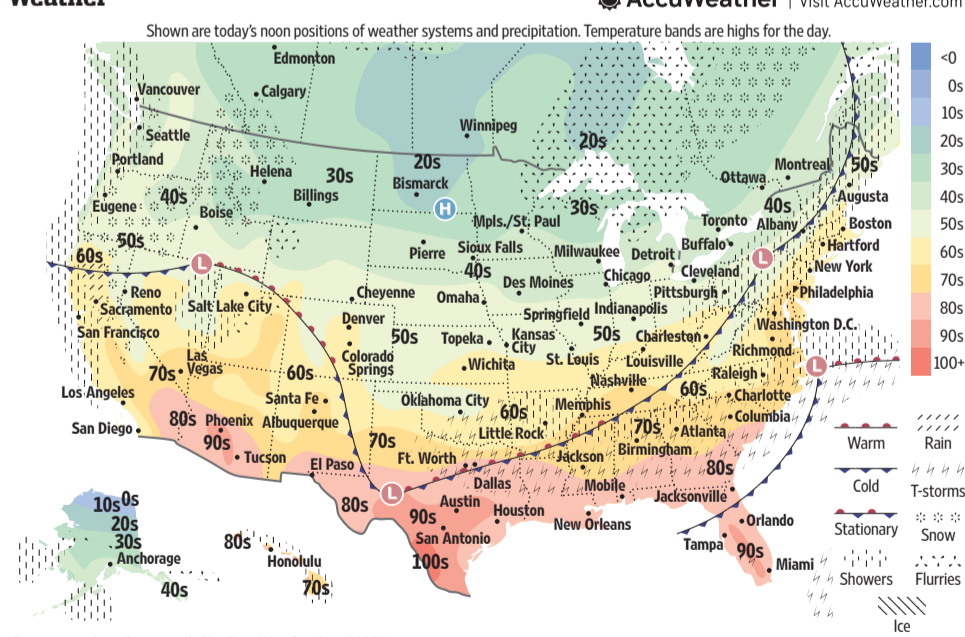
Their ancestors might lament big men today, but the game has never demanded more from their breed. They have to cover more ground. They have to guard more positions. Like so many jobs in the modern economy, they have to do more of just about everything.

"There's nobody in my group

who's going to like this style of basketball," says Bill Cartwright, the 7-foot-1 center who won three championships with Michael Jordan's Chicago Bulls. "But it is what it is right now. And it's going to keep evolving into something else later."

Embiid is the closest approximation to a traditional big man, but there is nothing traditional about anyone his size who is graceful handling the ball, comfortable behind the 3-point arc and productive at the free-throw line. The only 7-footers ever to average more foul shots than Embiid this season were Wilt

Weather



U.S. Forecasts

s., sunny; pc., partly cloudy; c., cloudy; sh., showers; t., storms; r., rain; sf., snow flurries; sn., snow; l., ice

City	Today			Tomorrow		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Anchorage	43	32	c	42	30	pc
Atlanta	75	59	t	71	59	t
Austin	90	63	pc	88	62	t
Baltimore	71	43	c	55	39	pc
Boise	52	31	sh	52	40	pc
Boston	63	41	c	52	39	pc
Burlington	47	33	sh	48	33	c
Charlotte	70	55	t	70	48	pc
Chicago	47	32	pc	44	35	pc
Cleveland	49	32	pc	41	35	c
Dallas	81	61	c	82	58	c
Denver	63	40	pc	65	30	s
Detroit	50	29	pc	47	35	s
Honolulu	82	71	sh	84	71	pc
Houston	89	71	pc	88	67	t
Indianapolis	57	32	pc	52	38	pc
Kansas City	56	40	pc	47	34	r
Las Vegas	78	56	s	84	60	s
Little Rock	67	51	t	60	46	r
Los Angeles	68	52	pc	73	55	s
Miami	85	74	pc	85	74	pc
Minneapolis	45	31	pc	40	34	pc
Phoenix	40	27	pc	43	30	c
Nashville	70	46	c	65	49	t
New Orleans	83	71	pc	83	67	t
New York City	66	42	c	52	40	s
Oklahoma City	59	51	t	71	44	pc

International

City	Today			Tomorrow		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	60	40	pc	62	42	s
Athens	71	58	pc	64	54	r
Baghdad	86	58	pc	88	59	s
Bangkok	100	82	pc	95	81	c
Beijing	72	49	s	66	48	c
Berlin	54	32	pc	57	35	pc
Brussels	62	40	pc	63	42	c
Buenos Aires	69	61	s	70	61	c
Dubai	99	80	c	97	78	s
Dublin	61	47	c	58	39	r
Edinburgh	63	48	c	64	47	c

City	Today			Tomorrow		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Frankfurt	60	38	pc	61	39	pc
Geneva	66	44	sh	63	39	pc
Havana	88	69	sh	88	68	sh
Hong Kong	79	69	pc	77	69	pc
Istanbul	66	51	pc	58	47	sh
Jakarta	92	77	sh	92	78	pc
Jerusalem	74	53	s	83	65	s
Johannesburg	60	50	t	57	52	t
London	67	46	pc	66	47	c
Madrid	77	48	s	76	52	pc
Manila	91	79	c	89	79	sh
Melbourne	80	63	s	81	62	pc
Mexico City	84	59	s	83	59	s
Milan	72	49	sh	63	46	pc
Moscow	39	35	sn	42	33	c
Mumbai	89	80	s	90	81	s
Paris	66	43	s	67	43	s
Rio de Janeiro	76	67	pc	76	67	r
Riyadh	97	71	s	96	69	r
Rome	70	50	pc	67	44	s
San Juan	83	74	sh	85	73	t
Seoul	65	51	c	68	46	pc
Shanghai	63	40	pc	67	54	c
Singapore	89	78	t	88	77	t
Sydney	74	60	pc	74	62	pc
Taipei City	73	65	pc	74	64	pc
Tokyo	59	49	c	63	53	pc
Toronto	47	29	pc	48	31	sf
Vancouver	50	39	c	52	43	c
Warsaw	52	32	sn	51	33	c
Zurich	60	37	pc	59	35	pc

Djokovic Is No. 1 but Not in Top Form

By Joshua Robinson

IN ANY OTHER SEASON of his glittering career, Novak Djokovic would have won a couple of tournaments by now. Mid-April is when one of the greatest tennis players of all time rounds into form for the spring and summer, usually with an Australian Open title in his back pocket already.

But from the moment he got stuck in a Melbourne airport in January, Djokovic knew that this wouldn't be a normal season. And three months after his fiasco in Australia, where he was deported following issues surrounding his vaccination status, he's barely been seen in competition.

So far in 2022, Novak Djokovic has played four competitive matches. His record is 2-2. The most recent was a loss this past week on the clay in Monte Carlo against Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina. Three wild sets saw Djokovic drop nine service games and finish the defeat completely gassed.

"I was hanging on the ropes the entire match," said Djokovic, who had played four times as much by this point in 2020.

The strange part is that the once predictable world of men's tennis is suddenly so fractured that Djokovic's prospects for the rest of the year are as bright as ever. He is back to No. 1 in the world after the three-week reign of



Novak Djokovic lost to Alejandro Davidovich Fokina in Monte Carlo.

Daniil Medvedev—who handed the spot back after a surprising defeat—and is among the clear favorites to win another French Open title in Paris next month.

Thirteen-time Roland-Garros champion Rafael Nadal's status remains a mystery—he suffered a cracked rib at the Indian Wells Masters last month and has dealt with a long-running foot ailment. Medvedev, the reigning U.S. Open champion, has already said he would punt on the clay-court season after undergoing surgery for a hernia. And Roger Federer, now 40 years old and recovering from knee surgery, is still months away from a possible return.

Of the top five men in the world, only No. 3 Alexander Zverev and No. 5 Stefanos Tsitsipas have stayed healthy enough to play a more or less normal schedule.

For Djokovic, though, the

biggest issue hasn't been injury. It's been his decision to remain unvaccinated against Covid-19.

After costing himself a shot at the Australian Open, eventually won by Nadal, that choice also prevented him from traveling to the U.S. to take part in the prestigious early-season Miami Open and Indian Wells tournaments, a pair of events that he has won a combined 11 times in his career.

Since then, Djokovic has found a little more freedom to roam in Europe, where Covid travel restrictions are now less stringent. Still, the lack of playing time has left him struggling for form. In Monte Carlo, Djokovic looked out of sorts. "I just kind of fought my way through to the third, but then I was just physically, completely—I collapsed," he said.

FROM TOP: ANDY MARLIN/USA TODAY SPORTS; MATT SLOCUM/ASSOCIATED PRESS

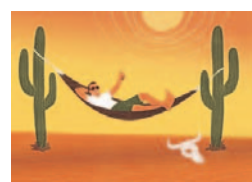
DENIS BALIBOUSE/REUTERS



Sliced Bread
The IRS may get a cut of your online side-hustle **B2**

EXCHANGE

Safe Bets
In the face of lower returns, taking more risks is a bad idea **B5**



BUSINESS | FINANCE | TECHNOLOGY | MANAGEMENT

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Saturday/Sunday, April 16 - 17, 2022 | **B1**

DJIA Closed (34451.23)

NASDAQ Closed (13351.08) **STOXX 600** Closed (459.82)

10-YR. TREAS. yield 2.808%

OIL Closed (\$106.95)

GOLD Closed (\$1,970.90)

EURO \$1.0814

YEN 126.45



The Chip That Saved Apple's Computers

A risky, yearslong effort to design its own silicon paid off for the tech giant when supply-chain disruptions left competitors scrambling

By **TIM HIGGINS**

Apple Inc. had a problem. While its iPhones were flying off shelves, sales of Mac computers were stagnating. Customers weren't thrilled with their design or performance.

Five years later, Mac sales are soaring. The turnaround is due to an unusual, yearslong effort to build one of the world's most advanced chip-design operations inside the world's best-known gadget maker.

Led by a onetime Intel Corp. engineer and IBM executive named Johny Srouji,

Apple's semiconductor division launched a risky project to replace the Intel processors that powered Apple laptops and desktops for 15 years with chips designed in-house. Those M1 chips, which are far more energy-efficient than Intel's, enabled Macs to run much faster and generate less heat, laying the groundwork for a resurgence in Apple's computer line. The company has now gained control over an essential component just as supply-chain disruptions cause disorder in the rest of the chip market.

Mr. Srouji's chip operation, which already designed chips that power iPhones, has helped Apple improve the profitability of its smartphones and computers. It also has positioned Apple to move into potential future products such as a car or extended-reality headsets.

Other tech juggernauts are now trying to emulate Apple's approach. Tesla Inc., Amazon.com Inc. and Meta Platforms Inc. are working on their own silicon as they chase more powerful computing needs for

Please turn to page B6

AmEx Pitches Probed By IRS

Agency investigates tax break touted to clients

The Internal Revenue Service is investigating **American Express Co.** over a questionable tax break that it pitched to clients, according to people familiar with the matter.

By **AnnaMaria Andriotis, Richard Rubin and Heather Haddon**

The civil investigation has been under way for a few months, these people said. The Wall Street Journal reported in November that AmEx salespeople touted a tax break based on a shaky interpretation of tax law. The pitch was part of a strategy to persuade business owners to sign up for costly payment services.

AmEx previously acknowledged, in response to the November article, that some members of its U.S. sales organization "failed to uphold our values and had positioned certain products inappropriately, specifically with respect to tax benefits."

An AmEx spokesman said this week that "we have already taken a number of actions to change products, policies and personnel and are

Please turn to page B9

Companies Face Push For Shorter Workweek

California bill aims to set 32-hour schedule

By **KATHERINE BINDLEY**

Which is better: A four-day workweek or five?

Companies and governments around the world have been debating that question recently, driven by a tight labor market along with workers seeking flexibility. A proposal in the California State Legislature would define the workweek in the state as 32 hours, not 40, for larger companies. By the end of next week, the California State Assembly's Labor and Employment Committee is expected to decide if the bill will move forward. While the proposal is many steps away from becoming law, if passed, the bill could affect more than 2,000 businesses.

Companies recently started to experiment seriously with reconfigured schedules. Companies from the funding platform **Kickstarter** in Brooklyn, N.Y., to **Unilever** New Zealand are piloting four-day workweek programs to test their productivity and work through snags.

"This is not going away," said

Please turn to page B2

More Online Shoppers Are Taking It Offline

When millions of locked-down Americans went online during the Covid-19 pandemic, it looked like the possible start of a permanent shift in consumer behavior.

Just like working and watching movies at home, shopping at home

By **Peter Rudegeair, Charity L. Scott and Sebastian Herrera**

was a faster, safer and easier alternative to trekking to an actual store. Companies like Amazon.com Inc., PayPal Holdings Inc., Shopify Inc. and Wayfair Inc. and others notched record profits, as their stock prices hit all-time highs in 2020 or 2021.

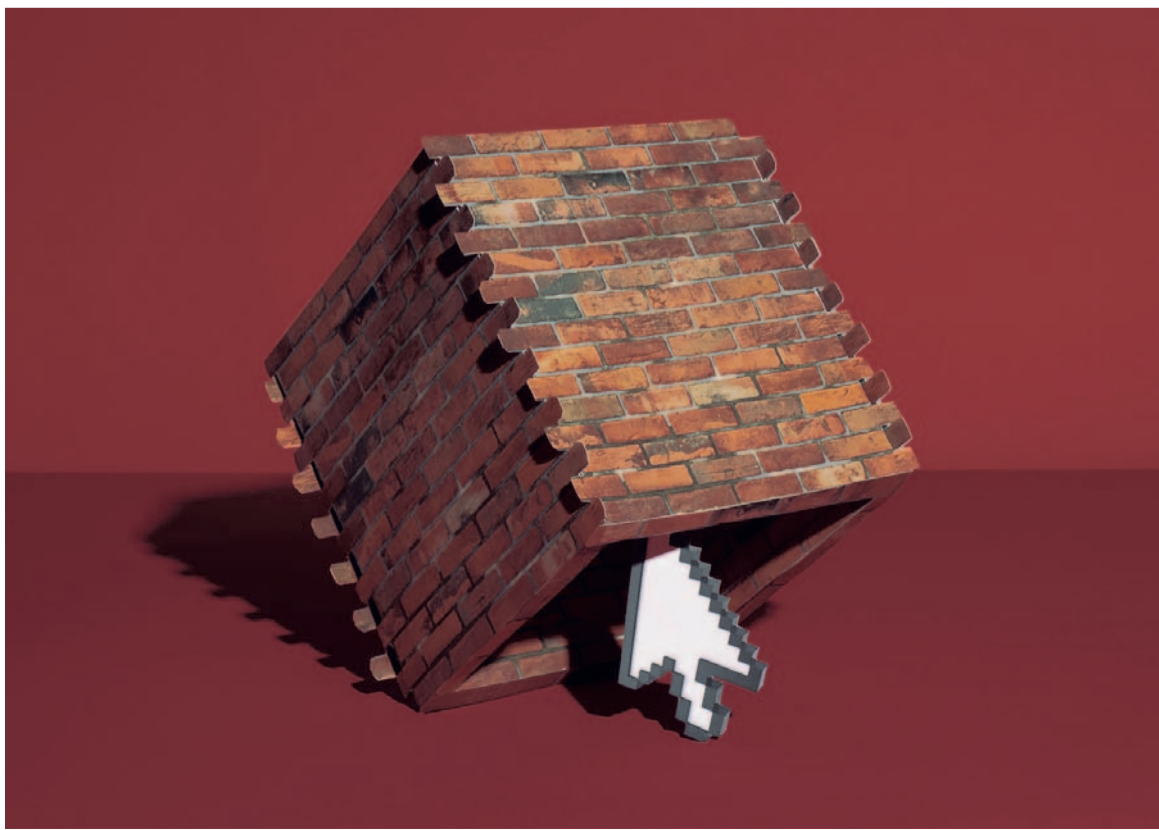
But hold off on those obituaries. Even as pandemic restrictions end, and many people continue working and watching movies at home,

stores are mounting a comeback. E-commerce companies that were counting on a broad secular shift are now facing slowdowns, and the prospect of expensive investments in bricks-and-mortar retailing while speeding up delivery times.

It turns out there are limits to buying stuff on screens. Foot traffic to malls and bricks-and-mortar stores has rebounded since vaccines and booster shots became widely available and the worst waves of the virus receded. Sales slowed at many digital storefronts specializing in apparel, home furnishings and other categories where many consumers prefer to see in-person and touch what they are buying.

"We've got over 100 years as a society of going into a store to buy something," Bernstein Research

Please turn to page B4



GABRIEL ZIMMER FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

THE SCORE

THE BUSINESS WEEK IN 7 STOCKS

MORGAN STANLEY

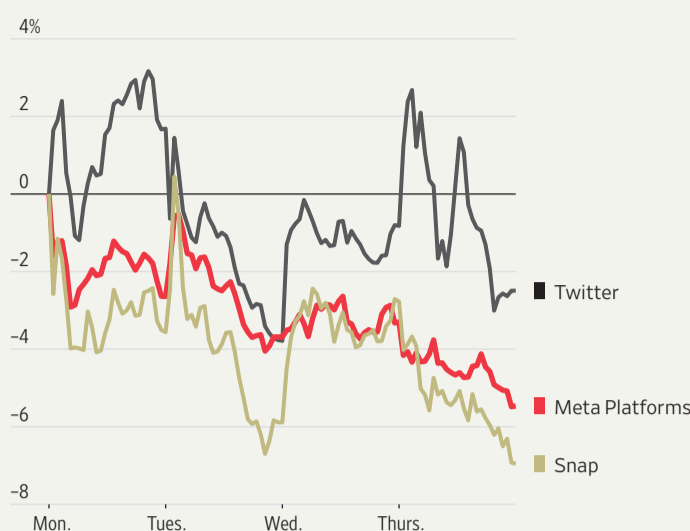
▲ Wall Street's deal-making boom is starting to fade. Morgan's Stanley's fees from brokering mergers and fund-raisings fell 37% in its first quarter, as corporate chiefs hung back from volatile markets. Investing banking fees were down 43% at Citigroup Inc., 36% at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., and 31% at JPMorgan Chase & Co. Morgan Stanley and other major U.S. banks also reported double-digit drops in first-quarter profit, hurt by inflation, but trading desks benefitted from volatility. Morgan Stanley's trading revenue was up 4%. Morgan Stanley shares **added 0.8% Thursday**.

ETSY INC.

▼ Etsy sellers have a new craft: protesting higher costs. More than 20,000 sellers on the digital marketplace signed a petition in opposition to increasing fees and changes. Some are also temporarily closing their shops in response to Etsy raising the commission it charges on each transaction to 6.5% from 5%, which executives say is critical to increasing investments in marketing and expanding seller-support services. The tension between the company and some of its roughly 5.3 million sellers comes as Etsy tries to evolve into a major e-commerce player. Etsy shares **lost 3.6% Tuesday**.

PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL-MEDIA STOCKS

Source: FactSet



TWITTER INC.

▼ The richest man in the world wants Twitter. It's not clear whether he will get it. Elon Musk on Thursday made a \$43 billion bid for the social-media company, but Twitter on Friday adopted a so-called poison pill to prevent a takeover. The offer from Tesla's CEO came after the billionaire reversed a decision to join Twitter's board. Twitter shares **fell 1.7% Thursday**.

DELTA AIR LINES INC.

▲ Delta expects flight demand to soar this summer. The airline reported on Wednesday a \$940 million quarterly loss, but said it returned to profitability during March and expects to report a profit in the second quarter. Inflation and higher fares aren't keeping customers away as they prioritize spending on travel, in some cases after a two-year break, Delta Chief Executive Ed Bastian said. Rising jet-fuel prices amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine are now one of the biggest threats to airline profits, but executives are confident they can weather them. Delta shares **jumped 6.2% Wednesday**.

BED BATH & BEYOND INC.

▼ Bed Bath & Beyond didn't clean up in the last quarter. The home goods chain reported another disappointing period of declining sales, raising pressure on the retailer to demonstrate that its turnaround plan is on track. Chief Executive Mark Tritton said supply-chain delays cost the retailer \$175 million in lost sales and many key categories were missing more than a third of goods. Executives also warned of a slowdown in consumer spending and said the company wouldn't be able to raise prices enough to offset inflation. Bed Bath & Beyond shares **fell 1.2% Wednesday**.

PELOTON INTERACTIVE INC.

▲ An activist investor says Peloton is spinning its wheels. Blackwells Capital on Wednesday pushed for Peloton to consider a sale, saying in a presentation that the fitness equipment company hasn't made enough progress under new CEO Barry McCarthy. Peloton soared as the pandemic fueled massive demand for its exercise bikes, but the company now is struggling as people venture outside. On Thursday, the company said it would cut prices of its stationary bikes and treadmills and raise monthly subscriptions for online workout classes. Peloton shares **gained 5.6% Wednesday**.

ALPHABET INC.

▲ Google is betting on the office. The Alphabet unit plans to invest about \$9.5 billion in U.S. offices and data centers this year, up from \$7 billion in 2021, as it opens new branches and expands facilities. Google said Wednesday that the investment in more than a dozen states will create at least 12,000 new full-time jobs by the end of the year. The search-engine giant plans to open a new office in Atlanta, boost its presence in New York, build out its campus in Boulder, Colo., and invest in data centers across the U.S. Alphabet shares **gained 1.5% Wednesday**. —Francesca Fontana



TAX REPORT | LAURA SAUNDERS

The IRS Gets a Cut of Your Online Gig

New tax rules mean platforms like Airbnb and eBay will soon have to report more transactions



Now that your 2021 taxes are done—or at least under way—it's time to focus on a key tax change for 2022 affecting millions of Americans making money through platforms like eBay, Etsy, Airbnb, Venmo and Uber. This change, which is beginning to ripple through e-commerce, tightens the tax reporting on income earned by people selling goods and services through online platforms. Starting this year, the platforms must send a Form 1099-K to the Internal Revenue Service reporting an individual's total revenue if platform earnings top \$600. Now, many more sellers, resellers and gig workers than in the past will have their platform earnings reported to the IRS. The upshot: They may have to pay taxes they haven't been paying, or else keep complex records showing why they don't need to. Under prior law, platforms had to send 1099-K forms only if a vendor earned more than \$20,000 and had over 200 transactions. The new bar is so low that opponents are trying to get it changed before the platforms send out a blizzard of confusing tax forms next January. Here's what's going on. Last year, Congress quietly lowered the 1099-K threshold as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. The goal was to boost tax compliance in an area notorious for lacking it—income the IRS doesn't know about.

According to the agency's research, tax compliance is highest when employers, financial institutions and others tell the IRS about payments to individuals. These are reported on forms like W-2 wage statements or an array of 1099 forms for other types of income. Compliance suffers when there isn't such reporting. The IRS's most recent tax-gap study found that of \$245 billion annually of misreported individual income taxes that are owed but not paid, 45% involved income without 1099s or similar reporting. Only 4% of the gap came from wage income subject to reporting and withholding. Platforms like eBay, Airbnb, et al. have had to send 1099-K forms to their sellers for years. But the prior threshold of 200 transactions and \$20,000 of revenue left room for significant tax dodging. If an owner of a short-term rental earned \$30,000 from 25 rentals in a year, the rental platform didn't have to send a 1099-K form because the owner had 200 or fewer transactions—even though revenue topped \$20,000. Miguel Centeno, a principal at Shared Centeno, a tax-prep and advisory firm in Austin, Texas, serving more than 400 short-term rental operators, says most of his clients want to comply with the law. But he well remembers one who didn't. "When he found out his rental income wasn't going to be reported on a 1099-K, he asked us to leave it off his tax return," says

Mr. Centeno. "When we said we couldn't, he immediately quit being a client." The new \$600 threshold will likely affect many gig workers who are independent contractors and haven't been reporting income, so paying taxes on that income could be costly. It could also pressure companies hiring them to raise pay or expand benefits in a tight labor market. The tax issues are different for many sellers on eBay and similar platforms, especially "casual" resellers cleaning out closets and attics. These vendors may not owe tax at all if they're selling items for less than they paid—or, when it comes to items inherited from Grandma, less than the item's value on the date of death. They also won't have to submit a form to the IRS detailing the purchase and selling prices of items, at least for now. Still, fear of becoming entangled with the IRS is prompting some sellers to back off. John Biscuti, 36, is a New York-based guitarist who works in a wedding cover band in addition to his day job at a tech firm. He enjoys buying, trying out, and then selling vintage guitars for a small profit or loss on Reverb, a platform for musical instruments and gear. Now, he's not selling at all. "I want to avoid tax hassles, and so do a lot of people I know," says Mr. Biscuti. "If I sell, I'll use something like Craigslist, but that means a far smaller market." Craigslist doesn't issue 1099-Ks because it doesn't transfer payments

between buyers and sellers. Alarmed by the \$600 threshold's effects on e-commerce, some members of Congress are hoping to change the law for 2022. Proposals include repealing current law and restoring prior thresholds, or raising the 1099-K bar to \$5,000. Nina Olson is one prominent tax specialist supporting an increase in the threshold, perhaps to \$5,000. Ms. Olson, the longtime National Taxpayer Advocate at the IRS, now heads the Center for Taxpayer Rights. She points out that the \$600 threshold for 1099-K forms, which also applies to two other 1099 forms received by self-employed workers, derives from a 1950s provision that wasn't adjusted for inflation. If it had been, these thresholds would now be about \$6,000, and she hopes Congress will raise them for all three forms. Meanwhile, platforms are changing systems to comply with the \$600 threshold. Venmo, the payments app, asks senders of funds whether the payment is to "friends and family," as for a share of a restaurant bill, or for "goods and services." Only payments for goods and services receive purchase protection, and recipients of more than \$600 in this category won't receive their payments until they provide Social Security numbers or other tax IDs. As platforms adjust, sellers, resellers and gig workers using them need to check the new law's effects as well. There's no guarantee it will be loosened.

Companies Face Bid for Short Week

Continued from page B1
Evan Low, a Democratic California State Assembly member who co-wrote the bill. Workers coming out of the pandemic prize flexible schedules, and some companies competing in a tight labor market are adapting, he added. If passed, the bill would define a workweek as 32 hours for private-sector companies with more than 500 employees. Hourly employees who log more time would need to be paid time-and-a-half for overtime. Earlier this month, the California Chamber of Commerce added the bill to its "job killer list," saying the legislation would significantly increase labor costs. Requiring businesses to pay the same amount of money for one less day of work won't end well should the bill pass, said Nicholas Bloom, a Stanford University economics professor. "Jobs will shift to Nevada or Oregon, and employers will not be able to raise pay for many years," he said. A better alternative for businesses and shift workers who have to do work in person, he said, would be longer hours spread out across fewer days, with workers benefiting from not having to commute as much. Economic studies out of Germany and France found fewer hours didn't increase employment. A 2013 study on private companies in Belgium found employees who worked between 25 and 35 hours a week were more productive than those who worked more or less than that. A recent survey of 459 companies, mostly in tech, found 90% of companies didn't plan to adopt a four-day workweek, according to Sequoia Consulting Group, which conducted the research. In 2019, Microsoft Corp. discontinued a four-day week experiment in Japan after five weeks. Most tech workers say they put in a lot more than 40 hours a week, so getting their current jobs done in 32 hours would be tough, according to Kyle Holm, a vice president at Sequoia Consulting Group who advises clients on compensation and benefits. Salaried employees don't generally qualify for overtime. "It doesn't really, to me, line up with what people are actually doing when they're not paid on an hourly basis," he said. In addition, many companies accommodated worker preferences by offering hybrid schedules, he said. A survey of more than 1,000 workers conducted by Qualtrics, a cloud software company, found 92% would support a four-day week and that 37% would be willing to take a 5% pay reduction for the schedule change. Many acknowledged the drawbacks, with nearly three-quarters saying they would end up working longer hours anyway.

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BUSINESS NEWS

Steinway
Plans
IPO on
NYSE

By JOSEPH PISANI

Steinway Musical Instruments Holdings Inc., makers of the iconic Steinway piano, is tuning up for another performance on the New York Stock Exchange.

The 169-year-old company, whose pianos are played in homes and on stages by the likes of Billy Joel, plans to go public, according to regulatory documents filed on Thursday with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The New York company hasn't been listed on a stock exchange since 2013, when it was bought for about \$512 million and taken private by **Paulson & Co.**, the hedge fund founded by billionaire John Paulson.

This time it plans to use the stock symbol STWY, a departure from last time around when it used LVB as a tribute to Ludwig van Beethoven.

A spokeswoman for Steinway declined to give a date for the initial public offering or say how much money it plans to raise. Proceeds of the IPO will go to Mr. Paulson, his firm and other stakeholders, according to the filing.

A spokesman for Paulson & Co. didn't comment.

A Steinway grand piano costs between \$60,000 and \$340,000, according to the filing. A smaller, upright piano starts at \$40,000. The company also sells brass and woodwind instruments through its Conn-Selmer line.

The Spirio, a self-playing piano, is its priciest model, making up about 32% of its total piano sales last year, the filing said. The Spirio appeals to those who don't know how to play but still want to hear one playing in their house, according to the company.

Steinway reported revenue of \$538 million in 2021, up 29% from the year before, according to the filing. Net income rose 14% to \$59 million in the same period.

The company's filing said it wants to sell more pianos in China, where it says sales of luxury goods are growing and more children are learning to play the piano than in other parts of the world. It opened a Beijing store in 2017.

"China represents a unique market for Steinway due to two primary cultural and structural factors," the filing said. "A deep-rooted reverence for classical music, specifically piano music, and a sizeable and rapidly expanding middle and upper class with an appetite for luxury Western products."

Steinway was founded in 1853 by Henry Engelhard Steinway, a German immigrant who developed the first Steinway piano in a Manhattan loft.

Expensive Jet Fuel Hits Airlines

By MATT GROSSMAN

American drivers are feeling the pain of rising gasoline prices. Airlines and their customers have it even worse.

Jet fuel, a kerosene-based product akin to diesel fuel, roughly doubled in price since April 2021 across the U.S., according to S&P Global Commodity Insights, while gasoline rose about 45%. A fall in exports of Russian diesel in recent weeks drove Western refiners to shift resources from jet to diesel production, leaving jet fuel undersupplied, S&P Global Commodity Insights analysts said.

Rising jet-fuel costs threaten to strain airlines' profitability just as resurgent travel demand promised relief from the pandemic's toll on the industry. They are also frustrating passengers who face higher ticket prices as airlines pass on high fuel prices to their customers.

The war in Ukraine has increased energy prices across the board this year as the West shuns Russia's oil exports, denting world-wide supply.

Diesel and jet fuel have seen some of the sharpest price increases. Demand for diesel stayed relatively strong throughout the pandemic, and Europe relied on Russian sources for it before the war. The two fuels are often produced in the same facilities, so a diesel crunch squeezes jet-fuel markets.

An uptick in airline travel as the pandemic abates is stretching supplies further. Fuel prices and their upward pressure on airfares helped make airline travel one of the fastest-rising components of the consumer-price index, a measure of inflation, last month.

How expensive has jet fuel become? It depends on where



Jet fuel roughly doubled in price since April 2021 in the U.S., according to S&P Global Commodity Insights.

you buy it.

On the U.S. Gulf Coast, where much of America's refining capacity is concentrated, a gallon cost about \$3.80 as of Thursday, compared with \$2.19 at the start of the year, according to OPIS, part of News Corp's Dow Jones & Co., which publishes The Wall Street Journal and Dow Jones Newswires.

At the New York Harbor hub, which feeds fuel to airports around the Northeast, prices surged above \$7.50 a gallon earlier this month, a record, before beginning to retreat. S&P Global Commodity Insights analyst Lenny Rodriguez said he expects New York prices to normalize as a short-term supply imbalance abates.

Airlines must now balance managing fuel expenses with their efforts to lure customers back to the skies. U.S. airlines are betting that their typical strategy for periods of expen-

sive fuel—cutting flights and raising prices—will help insulate their bottom lines without losing too many customers this year. That strategy is feeding optimism on Wall Street that airlines can navigate higher fuel prices without a big financial hit. Shares of major carriers, which fell after Russia invaded Ukraine, have mostly recovered.

Passengers, though, are seeing fares soar. Domestic ticket prices have risen by 40% since the start of the year, while international fares are up 25%, according to data from the travel-booking app Hopper.

John Redant, an information-technology professional from North Charleston, S.C., is traveling to Saskatchewan in May to visit his sister after her cancer diagnosis. A ticket was selling for as much as \$1,700, he said, before he found a deal by booking a long layover. At about \$700, how-

Jet fuel prices at U.S. terminals



Note: As of April 8
Source: S&P Global Commodity Insights

ever, the trip was still more expensive than what he was accustomed to paying.

"If this was for a vacation, no-brainer: I would have rescheduled," Mr. Redant said.

These days, most U.S. airlines don't hedge their fuel expenses in financial markets.

Cyber Rules Test Security Chiefs, Boards

By JAMES RUNDLE

Corporate security chiefs expect a closer relationship with their boards to emerge from recent Securities and Exchange Commission proposals seeking to pry more details from companies about cyberattacks and defense measures. At least one business group worries the SEC is going too far.

Under proposals from the SEC, the agency expects to know more about how listed companies manage cyber risk. Businesses would be required to disclose which board directors have cybersecurity expertise, how often the topic of cybersecurity is discussed and what, if any, oversight the board has over cyber matters. The SEC wants to go further for investment funds and advisers, requiring boards to approve cybersecurity policies.

The proposals, now open for public comment, indicate the SEC is getting tougher as per-

vasive cyberattacks cost victims billions of dollars a year, according to estimates from the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association, a lobbying group for asset managers, expressed concern over the breadth of the proposed rules. In a letter sent to the SEC dated April 11, Sifma said while companies should have processes in place to escalate cyber issues to boards, directors shouldn't be expected to manage them directly. "We believe the requirement that boards approve policies and procedures and exercise formal oversight is too prescriptive and crosses into the realm of management," Sifma said.

The SEC didn't respond to a request for comment. But others say they provide much-needed clarity on expectations from watchdogs, as cybersecurity has become a core business risk for companies.

"I think it's a reset, and I think the advantage of this reset is they're being very clear. They're telling you what they expect," said Cyrus Vance Jr., partner and global chair of law firm Baker McKenzie LLP's cybersecurity practice.

In practice, security chiefs

Businesses would be required to disclose which directors have cybersecurity skills.

say, this means that chief information security officers and others with cyber responsibilities must learn how to translate cybersecurity data into clear risk information that nontechnical board directors can quickly understand.

This may force some companies to rethink the role it-

self, said Shaun Marion, CISO at fast-food chain McDonald's Corp. He said when he landed his first cybersecurity executive position in 2011, he lacked experience interacting with a corporate board and didn't get much help. "My first board meeting was sink or swim," he said. "I wouldn't say I swam."

The SEC's call for senior leaders and directors to understand and disclose more about their company's cybersecurity posture will require a strong relationship between the CISO and the board, he said. "It will change how we develop the next generation of CISOs," he said, relying less on technical knowledge and more on business-risk experience.

Additionally, companies may have to examine the composition of their boards more closely in light of the rules and the heightened threat environment. Steven Babb, CISO at **Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group's** investor-services

business, said many boards often suffer from a lack of technical knowledge, which can translate to improper management of risks. "I think across boards, globally, there is a lack of understanding as to not just technology, but security in terms of how important it is to an organization," he said.

Installing directors with cybersecurity expertise can help the rest of the board grasp these issues, said Baker McKenzie's Mr. Vance. Companies added such expertise to their senior ranks in recent years, according to financial rating agency Moody's Investors Service. A survey of 1,300 companies published March 31 found around 56% of financial companies had some cyber expertise on their boards, compared with 49% of nonfinancial businesses, 37% of infrastructure issuers and 36% of public-sector entities.

—Kim S. Nash
contributed to this article.

But 2022 has been a good year to be a hedger. **Southwest Airlines Co.**, one of the few airlines that hedges, said last month that climbing fuel prices have boosted the value of its fuel insurance to more than \$1 billion. The Dallas-based carrier protects itself against rising costs by buying contracts that benefit when fuel becomes pricier.

Delta Air Lines Inc., the first carrier to report its early-2022 results, said Wednesday that its fuel costs rose 33% in the latest quarter to \$2.79 a gallon, compared with a quarter earlier. It projected the expense might rise to as much as \$3.35 a gallon in the three months through June. Delta said it was successfully passing on rising costs to customers.

Jet fuel is standard not only for airliners but also for many of the propeller planes flown by charter businesses and small cargo companies.

Tradewind Aviation, an Oxford, Conn.-based charter carrier, raised rates by 10% to 15% this year because of higher fuel and labor costs. Its chief executive, Eric Zipkin, said that with a fleet of about 25 small passenger planes, Tradewind doesn't have the scale to hedge.

Mr. Zipkin said fare increases have gone smoothly because his wealthy charter customers are used to paying a premium.

"In the private-aviation world, we typically trade on service, not price," he said.

Southeast Asia's Role as Top U.S. Solar Supplier Is Probed

By NIHARIKA MANDHANA

For the past five years, Southeast Asia has ranked as America's top source of solar panels from abroad, driven in large part by Chinese manufacturers that expanded into the region after the U.S. in 2012 imposed duties on exports from China. A new U.S. probe has cast a shadow over that growth run.

Washington wants to know how much China-made material is used in solar panels shipped from Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia—countries that accounted for 85% of American imports last year. It is investigating whether producers do small-time processing in these countries to skirt tariffs while reaching back into China-based supply chains for critical components.

The scrutiny comes as Southeast Asia was poised for new investment to meet growing clean-energy demand in the U.S., which doesn't make anywhere near enough solar panels to support the surge. Many of those expansion plans will now slow down as the industry awaits a ruling. If heavy tariffs are imposed, the region would become far less



Solar panels on farmland in Thurmont, Md., last year.

attractive as a U.S.-focused manufacturing base.

Factories pumping out solar products are spread across Southeast Asia. They have generated tens of thousands of local jobs and billions of dollars in exports each year. The world's leading panel producers have manufacturing bases there, including U.S. company **First Solar Inc.** and Chinese heavyweights such as **LONGi Green Energy Technology Co.**, **JinkoSolar Holding Co.** and **Trina Solar Co.**

"Since 2013, a lot of manu-

facturing capacity has been built in Southeast Asia in order to be able to ship to the U.S. market," said Edurne Zoco, executive director of clean energy technology at S&P Global Commodity Insights.

Manufacturing in Southeast Asia is largely focused on the last two stages of the process: converting silicon wafers into solar cells and assembling those cells into panels that go on rooftops and in massive arrays. Last year, the region had the capacity to produce 43 gigawatts worth of panels—

more than six times the U.S.'s output—and was projected to grow to 52 gigawatts this year, according to S&P Global Commodity Insights. Southeast Asian countries can make 38 gigawatts worth of solar cells. The U.S. has no significant capacity to make cells.

As of 2021, about three-quarters of panel production in Southeast Asia was Chinese-owned, as was 90% of capacity for manufacturing solar cells, according to data from the firm.

Globally, China is the leader at all stages of production. Before cells and panels are made, the raw material polysilicon needs to be molded into rod-shaped ingots, then sliced thinly into wafers. China produces most of the world's ingots and wafers. Some Chinese companies are beginning to make these inputs in Malaysia and Vietnam, but the scale remains relatively small.

The petition that led to the U.S. probe says Chinese companies built globally dominant supply chains thanks to government subsidies and other backing that enabled them to cut prices and squeeze out competitors. It argues that the companies rely on those supply chains for critical portions

of the manufacturing process and finish up the goods in Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia so that they can export to the U.S. without paying the decade-old U.S. duties.

Governments in Southeast Asia, American developers of solar-power projects and Chinese manufacturers disagree. Solar products made in Thailand undergo substantial transformation, not minimal operations, Thailand's Department of Foreign Trade said. The Malaysian government said making solar cells and panels is capital intensive and complex.

"The countries listed in the petition have invested billions of dollars to establish a manufacturing base," the Solar Energy Industries Association, a Washington trade group that opposes the investigation, said last week. "Fabricating solar cells and panels is a major and significant operation that will take years to establish in the United States."

The issue goes back more than a decade, when Chinese manufacturers began producing solar panels cheaply. In 2011, Chinese panels made up 57% of American imports, while the four Southeast Asian countries involved in the cur-

rent probe contributed 12%, according to data from consulting firm Rystad Energy. In 2012, the Obama administration responded by imposing tariffs called antidumping and countervailing duties on solar cells and panels from China.

Major Chinese panel makers expanded to Southeast Asia. In 2015, JinkoSolar opened a facility in Malaysia to produce 500 megawatts worth of solar cells and 450 megawatts of panels. LONGi built its first overseas production base in Malaysia. Last year, Trina Solar said it built a large, highly automated facility in Vietnam to make 3 gigawatts of cells and 4.5 gigawatts of panels.

By 2021, panels from China dropped to 0.3% of U.S. imports, while Vietnam and Malaysia accounted for more than 30% each and Thailand made up 18%, Rystad data shows. U.S. solar developers say tariffs would disrupt this pipeline.

Andy Klump, chief executive of Clean Energy Associates, a firm that helps U.S. entities make decisions about where to buy solar panels, said tariffs would cause some developers to delay projects or pass on the higher costs of importing panels to U.S. households.

EXCHANGE

Online Shoppers Go Offline

Continued from page B1
analyst Mark Shmulik said. “That muscle memory doesn’t just switch off because you were forced to buy things online a couple of times during a pandemic.”

Data suggests consumers are finding a new balance between online and in-person shopping. In the second quarter of 2020, as stay-at-home measures were in place, the share of U.S. retail sales that happened online surged more than 4 percentage points to 15.7%, according to Census Bureau data adjusted for seasonal factors. By the fourth quarter of 2021, that share had dropped to 12.9%, putting consumer buying habits roughly back to their prepandemic trend.

This March was the first month since the pandemic hit during which e-commerce sales declined from the same period a year earlier while in-store sales rose, according to Mastercard SpendingPulse, which tracks transactions made over the Mastercard payments network as well as survey-based estimates for spending with cash and checks. The drop in online spending was 3.3%, the first year-over-year decline since November 2013. The rise for bricks-and-mortar stores was 11.2%.

Dick’s Sporting Goods Inc. saw online sales fall 11% in its most recent quarter while sales at bricks-and-mortar locations open for more than a year jumped 14%. Electronics giant Best Buy Co. reported higher U.S. revenue in the fiscal year ended Jan. 29 despite a 12% slide in online sales. At department-store chain Macy’s Inc., the proportion of sales from digital sources declined in the quarter ended Jan. 29, to 39% from 44% a year earlier.

One shopper who is rotating back to stores is Karyn Hirsch. The 46-year-old food blogger from Los Angeles was a longtime holdout to ordering groceries online and only stopped going to her local market in person in December 2020 when both she and her husband got Covid-19. “That was a leap of faith, and I know that the store tried to do a good job, but it’s never going to be like it would be if you are in person choosing yourself,” said Ms. Hirsch.

Once she was fully vaccinated, she returned to the grocery aisles. Ms. Hirsch felt like shopping online limited her options. “It’s nice to know it’s available if I’m sick or otherwise not able to do my own shopping, but it’s certainly not going to be my first choice,” she said.

To be sure, online retail sales are still up from prepandemic levels, amid a long-term shift in shopping trends. Industry observers caution that shoppers could revert to some of their online pandemic habits if the health crisis worsens or compa-



People returned to stores like Dick’s Sporting Goods, above, pressuring e-commerce giants like Amazon, below.



nies make investments to improve the digital experience.

But the current moment is bad news for online retailers and the tech companies that serve them. Amazon posted about \$206 million in operating losses in the U.S. in the fourth quarter, and revenue at its online stores segment fell by 1%, the first year-over-year decline since the metric was first disclosed in 2016. Online marketplace eBay Inc. reported that the number of active sellers and buyers on the platform declined in 2021 from the prior year. PayPal lost tens of billions of dollars in market value after it delivered a weak profit forecast earlier this year.

“E-commerce is definitely not as sexy as it was a year and a half ago,” said Max El-Sokkary, an analyst at Zevin Asset Management, which owns shares of Amazon and eBay.

Even in early 2020, e-commerce had its challenges. Illnesses at factories in Asia and elsewhere upended supply chains. Amazon and other digital sellers struggled with mass absences of employees. The billion-dollar question for executives and investors was whether the new online buying

patterns would stick.

Even though foot traffic at shopping centers is still down from prepandemic levels, it has shown some signs of improvement. Monthly visits to the top indoor malls grew nearly 17% in March from the prior month, while open-air lifestyle centers and outlets grew at a roughly 18% and 26% clip, respectively, according to data-analytics firm Placer.ai.

Executives at PayPal were among those who initially wagered that online shopping habits picked up during the pandemic would last. The financial-technology company processed nearly \$1 trillion in digital payments in 2020 and added roughly 73 million new users that year, nearly double 2019’s tally.

At an investor event last year, PayPal finance chief John Rainey said the company by 2025 would double its customer count to 750 million.

“2020 changed everything,” Mr. Rainey said in February 2021. “Black swan events tend to result in permanent changes in consumer behavior, and this one is no different.”

A year later, PayPal tempered its optimism. The lift from users

spending money from stimulus checks isn’t carrying over into 2022. PayPal in February abandoned its 2025 goal of reaching 750 million customers.

“We got ahead of ourselves in extrapolating some of the pandemic trends in terms of how enduring or persistent those would be,” Mr. Rainey said at a March investor conference. PayPal announced this week that Mr. Rainey would leave the company in May to become Walmart Inc.’s finance chief.

Wayfair also had to temper its enthusiasm after riding a surge of demand for online shopping and home makeovers to its first annual profit as a public company in 2020. Its shares closed above \$345 on March 22, 2021, or nearly 15 times its low from a year earlier.

By the end of 2021, Wayfair reported four million fewer active customers than the year before and swung to a loss, citing “broader e-commerce softness.” It also braced investors for new plans to spend big sums to build out a physical network of stores. Shares now trade around \$108 apiece.

Wayfair Chief Executive Niraj Shah has likened consumers’ shifting behavior to a pendulum. “Beginning of Covid, it swung very, very strongly to online,” he told analysts in February. “And on our way out of Covid, it’s swinging the other way.”

At Amazon, the total value of goods sold grew in 2021 at half the rate it did in 2020, according to an analysis by research firm Marketplace Pulse. Costs for the largest U.S. online retailer are rising as well. Operating expenses in Amazon’s North America business are up more than 66% from 2019, growing at a faster pace than sales. It spent more than \$4 billion alone in the fourth quarter as it dealt with supply-chain constraints and inflationary pressures on goods and wages.

Some shoppers are still searching for the right balance between shopping online and stores. Shirley Lo, 38, used to go regularly to HomeGoods and Target and switched to online shopping during the pandemic. The Washington, D.C.-based photographer says she’s replicated the social aspects of shopping in person through Facebook groups and other social media, so she doesn’t miss the bricks-and-mortar experience. “After the pandemic, it seems like most stores have more selection online, even a place like Target,” she said.

Ms. Lo said she uses in-store pickup to make sure the items she wants to purchase are available to avoid wasted trips, although she still goes to the grocery store for fresh produce and other perishables. “I’m very particular,” she said. “It’s nice to smell stuff like bread or herbs, and pick it up and eat it right away versus waiting even a couple hours for it to ship.”

For traditional retailers, that equilibrium means investing in better offline and online experiences.

Walmart is working to keep e-commerce sales growing as consumer habits revert to fend off competitors, even as it relies on its around 4,700 U.S. stores for the bulk of its revenue and profit. Walmart said U.S. online sales grew 1% in the most recent quarter, while overall sales grew 5.6%.

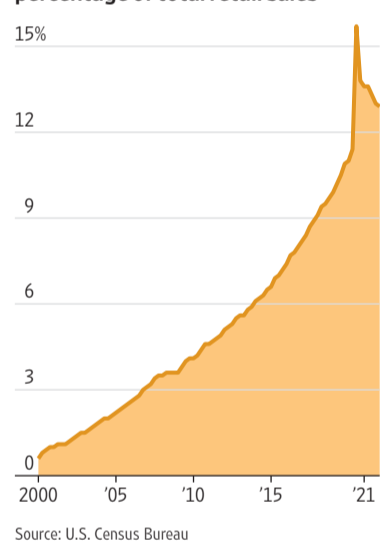
Walmart is building around 100 automated small fulfillment centers attached to existing stores in the next few years, an investment executives hope will allow the company to fill more orders faster to meet demand without clogging store aisles with workers collecting online orders.

E-commerce companies remain bullish about their prospects. But some executives say there are still some elements of the in-person experience that will be difficult for digital to duplicate.

“The internet is a great place to transact, and it’s not great to discover,” said Jeffrey Raider, co-founder and co-CEO of Harry’s Inc., a consumer packaged goods company.

—Sarah Nassauer contributed to this article.

Estimated e-commerce as a percentage of total retail sales



PERSONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The trusted advisers of top business leaders

Revathi Advaiti

Chief executive officer, Flex Ltd.



When someone told Revathi Advaiti decades ago she would be a CEO one day, she laughed. “I said, ‘I don’t even know what that means.’”

The prediction came true in 2019 when she became the boss of Flex Ltd., which employs more than 160,000 people and makes everything from coffee makers to respirators. Now the 54-year-old CEO is helping the manufacturing and logistics firm navigate a complex supply-chain crisis, the pandemic and a war in Ukraine, where Flex has employees.

“When it comes to crises, I’m very hands on,” she said. “I think that’s part of just my DNA. Maybe that’s the engineer in me.”

Her rise in the manufacturing world started when she moved to the U.S. from India for graduate school at the University of Oklahoma in her mid-20s. A career fair there led to a job with power management company Eaton Corp., where she joined its operations management development program and eventually ascended to chief operating officer of Eaton’s electrical sector.

While she was a division COO, her advisers convinced her a higher post was possible. One asked: “Why aren’t you a CEO?”

Here are four of her most trusted advisers:

—Emily Glazer



Sandy Cutler
former chairman and CEO of Eaton Corp.

Ms. Advaiti met Mr. Cutler about a week into her job at Eaton. She was in a training program and selected to have lunch with the CEO. They were served steak, mashed potatoes and green beans, so Ms. Advaiti, then a vegetarian, picked at the potatoes. Mr. Cutler, sensing something was wrong, asked the staff to bring her a vegetarian meal and suggested everyone wait until she was served. “People talk about empathy these days,” she said. “Just having that moment where he understood had a huge influence in my life.”



Kathy Mazzarella
CEO and chairman of Graybar Electric Company Inc.

Ms. Mazzarella started out as one of Ms. Advaiti’s biggest—and toughest—customers at Eaton. The two stayed in touch, and Ms. Mazzarella was one of the first calls Ms. Advaiti received when she was named CEO of Flex. The two later had dinner, where Ms. Mazzarella shared advice about how to be a successful CEO. “She said: ‘This role is going to take a toll and you have to think about what are you going to do about yourself,’” Ms. Advaiti said. “I did not understand the magnitude of that when she first talked to me but I have revisited that so many times over.”



Scott Trezise
chief human-resources officer of Lumen Technologies Inc.

It was Mr. Trezise who first told Ms. Advaiti she would be a CEO someday. They met during a career fair decades ago at the University of Oklahoma. Mr. Trezise, then working for Eaton, hired Ms. Advaiti; he hired her at Honeywell years later. Ms. Advaiti said she calls Mr. Trezise when working through a challenge related to people, an organization or her own career. He helped her navigate the hiring of new people and find a good balance at Flex. “You have to have people who know the business that you can lean on and listen to,” she said.



Roger Carr
chairman of BAE Systems PLC

Ms. Advaiti became a director of BAE Systems because of Mr. Carr, she said. “He made sure that the board’s role was clearly setting direction and helping the team but not being in the day to day,” she said. She is now on the board of Uber Technologies Inc. and Flex. When Ms. Advaiti was figuring out her next steps from her time as COO of Eaton’s electrical sector, Mr. Carr convinced her she should lead a company, asking her: “Why aren’t you a CEO?” Mr. Carr “was very influential in me thinking that I could,” she said.

EXCHANGE

THE INTELLIGENT INVESTOR | JASON ZWEIG

Returns Will Be Lower. That's OK.

Don't take on more risk in an attempt to catch up



With U.S. stocks off more than 7% and the bond market down almost 9% so far this year, many investors seem to feel they have to take more risk to catch up.

In fact, you should take less. In unforgiving markets, it's harder to recover from mistakes. Over the past decade or more, stocks, bonds, real estate and cryptocurrencies—just about every asset—boomed. You often got rewarded for reckless risks and, even if you got punished, rising markets helped you recover quickly from your blunders. That won't last forever.

A global survey of nearly 300 professional investors by BofA Global Research found in March that the percentage of fund managers with greater than average exposure to U.S. stocks climbed 27 percentage points from February. That happened even as many of them say their holdings of cash

have edged up.

And fund managers' trigger fingers are itching even worse than usual, with 42% reporting that their investment horizon is three months or less, up from 26% the previous month.

Individual investors don't seem to be pulling in their horns, either.

"Alternatives" such as private equity, private debt, hedge funds and nontraded real estate have become so fashionable that investors are forsaking flexibility and low fees in order to buy them.

One of the most popular ways to invest in alternatives is through unlisted closed-end funds, portfolios of alternative assets that are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission but don't trade on an exchange.

Investors generally can't get their money out daily, as they can at traditional mutual funds or exchange-traded funds. Instead, they can sell only at predetermined times, often four times a year, sometimes only twice—or even



ALEX NABAUM

whenever the fund manager happens to permit it.

Holding on for years could help the managers produce gains; in the meantime, it enables them to harvest fat fees. Management expenses often exceed 1.5% annually. Such funds managed a total of \$93.7 billion at the end of 2021, up from \$54 billion in 2018, according to Patrick Newcomb, a director at Fuse Research Network in Needham, Mass.

The glory days for approaches like these are probably over, says Antti Ilmanen, an investment strategist at AQR Capital Management in Greenwich, Conn. He's the author of a new book, "Investing Amid Low Expected Returns."

Mr. Ilmanen's volume isn't beach reading; it's full of subtleties and complexities. But its message is stark and simple. With many assets still near all-time highs, future returns will likely be lower, says Mr. Ilmanen—across the board, for traded and untraded investments alike.

Yes, I know: That's what many market commentators have been saying for years. And the markets kept going up anyway. Isn't this just more negativism?

Nope. High recent returns make

you feel rich, naturally leading you to extrapolate further gains. But you're just borrowing them from the future. The more highly valued your holdings are, the lower their return is likely to be down the road.

To see why, let's pretend you own a hypothetical bond. To keep things as simple as possible, imagine a plain \$1,000 bond paying 3% a year for 10 years.

If you buy it for \$1,000, this bond's \$30 annual interest would earn you a 3% yield. If, however, you pay \$1,200 for a bond with the same terms, your \$30 interest yields you 2.5%.

The higher the price you pay, the lower your return on the bond; there's no way around it.

Unlike with a bond, a stock's future income stream can grow. If it doesn't meet expectations, though, the same general principle applies—without any assurance of getting your original investment back in the end.

To make general judgments of how expensive stocks are, Mr. Ilmanen uses a modified version of a measure developed by Yale University economist Robert Shiller. Mr. Ilmanen's math indicates that U.S. stocks could return less than 3% annually, after inflation, over

the next five years or more—among its lowest estimates ever. Although you can't use such data to tell exactly when stocks are overpriced, says Mr. Ilmanen, "the message is that the prospect of low expected returns should be taken seriously."

What can investors do? A few suggestions are obvious.

Save more, spend less (especially on investment-management fees).

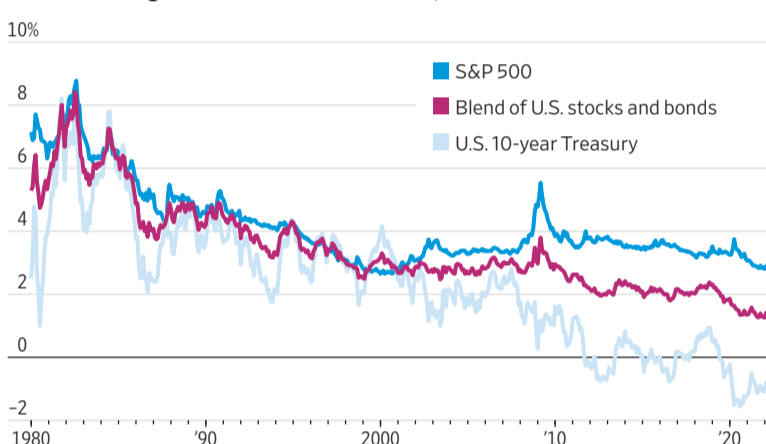
Avoid chasing illiquid assets—some of which, like private equity, are no longer definitively cheap relative to publicly traded stocks, Mr. Ilmanen's research suggests.

Look outside the U.S., where stocks are considerably cheaper.

Above all, don't take bigger gambles to try catching up. Riskier holdings, such as untraded equity and bonds, have looked safe during the bull markets of the last decade. But they could deliver "bad returns in bad times" that aren't as fleeting as early 2020, says Mr. Ilmanen.

"If we get rising yields [as interest rates go up], more valuations will be challenged," he says. "If you take less risk now, not more, you will be able to swing at the fat pitches when they come."

Estimated long-term future annual returns, net of inflation



Note: Blend is 60% S&P 500, 40% 10-year U.S. Treasury. Prospective return estimates based on current income and long-term valuation, adjusted for inflation. Source: AQR Capital Management



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EXCHANGE



'If we do this, can we deliver better products?' Johny Srouji, Apple's silicon leader, said of designing chips in-house. 'That's the No. 1 question.'

How Apple Became a Silicon Giant

Continued from page B1
specialized applications like driverless cars, data centers and virtual reality. Meanwhile, suppliers of chips like Intel are scrambling to alter their strategy in response, investing heavily so they can fabricate chips designed by others.

Deciding to fire a crucial supplier and bring its production in-house can be a wrenching crossroads for any company. Mr. Srouji's success building the M1 chips was far from a certainty—especially as the coronavirus pandemic threatened the rollout in 2020.

Bringing out M1 chips required Apple to rewrite the way it operated in order to avoid delays from the pandemic. Apple had to draw

'It was abnormally bad,' recalls a former Intel engineer about the chip maker's problems.

on 14 years of behind-the-scenes work by Mr. Srouji, who had built the chip team from 45 people to several thousand across the globe, including his homeland of Israel.

"What I learned in life: You think through all of the things you can control and then you have to be flexible and adaptive and strong enough to navigate when things don't go to plan," Mr. Srouji, Apple senior vice president of hardware technologies, said in a rare interview. "Covid was one for example."

After joining Apple in 2008, Mr. Srouji, now 57, initially developed chips for the iPhone. His approach of designing the chip to Apple's specific needs for the device allowed the company to create a more powerful, yet efficient, chip than using one off the shelf from a supplier that must meet requirements for general use.

Such things matter in a device dependent on batteries for operating and used for hours at a time running processor-heavy tasks like videos and games. The result: Apple's own chips for iPhones starting in 2010—based on Arm Ltd. underpinnings—helped boost battery life and allowed for better integration of software to push the boundaries of performance of other features, such as its camera system, which runs complex algorithms to improve photos' lighting and focus.

Chasing that strategy, Apple has become a "semiconductor juggernaut," according to Wayne Lam, an analyst at CCS Insight, who estimates that Apple's spending last year on its internal semiconductors would rank it as the 12th-largest chip company in the world by revenue. The sea change has Intel pivoting some of its attention to take on contract work fabricating chips designed by companies that once bought Intel-designed chips.

"It seemed a little crazy, at first, that they could actually consider kicking Intel out," said Mike Demler, an independent analyst who has followed the semiconductor industry for almost 50 years. Instead, he added: "It has made them a more dominant platform overall."

In 2017, as Apple was reaping the fruits of its success with its chips in the iPhone and Apple Watch, it was facing backlash from customers over its Mac lineup and the perception that it was falling behind.

Apple executives convened a roundtable of tech bloggers to do something the company rarely did: apologize publicly for shortcomings in high-end Macs aimed at professionals, and promise that better products were in the works. But the criticisms went beyond Apple's high-end computers. Months after the mea culpa, new laptops that still included Intel chips were panned for disappointing performance, including computing power that was held back to keep the machines from overheating. Apple later issued a software update to address the issue. Sales of Macs were stagnating and paled in comparison with the iPhone business, which represented almost two-thirds of the company's revenue.

Some industry observers have suggested Intel's own missteps may have forced Apple's hand. Intel's pace of innovation had slowed and quality suffered.

"It was abnormally bad," former Intel engineer François Piednoël was quoted in 2020 as saying by industry publication PC Gamer. "Our buddies at Apple became the number one filer of problems in the architecture. And that went really, really bad. When your customer starts finding almost as many bugs as you found yourself, you're not leading into the right place."

Mr. Piednoël confirmed the comments, adding that Intel now benefits from new leadership and has made improvements.

After initially dismissing Apple's in-house chip designs, Intel indicated that it was taking the competitive threat seriously. "They did a pretty good job," Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger said last fall during an "Axios on HBO" interview. "So what I have to do is create a better chip than they can do themselves. I would hope to win this piece of their business."

Intel in a statement reiterated that the company is focused on developing and manufacturing processors that outperform rivals'. "No other silicon provider can match the combination of performance, software compatibility and form factor choice that Intel-powered systems offer," the company said.

The transition to Apple's own chips threatened to cause headaches for software engineers at

the company, which had relied for more than a decade on Intel chips for its Mac computers. Now those programmers had to write software that could work on both the old chips and the new ones—an issue the company had struggled with in 2006, when it moved to Intel chips from an earlier system known as PowerPC. That transition entailed numerous last-minute revisions to the laptop's main circuit board, according to a person involved in that effort. "A lot of people were afraid we were going to have the same problem," this person said.

Mr. Srouji acknowledged the change in strategy faced robust debate inside the company—computer makers just hadn't designed such components in-house before.

The risk was great—a misstep would be embarrassing and costly. Part of the challenge his team faced was supplying the range and needs of computers offered by the company, from an entry-level \$999 MacBook Air to high-end desktops that cost thousands of dollars.

As Apple's hardware engineers sought to design the chips as efficiently as possible for its particular needs, the company's software designers tuned the computers to favor the specifications it most desired, such as smooth videogame graphics.

"First and foremost, if we do this, can we deliver better products?" Mr. Srouji said of the debate. "That's the No. 1 question. It's not about the chip. Apple is not a chip company."

Next, he said, the team had to figure out if it could deliver and execute while building up the muscle to handle more products and predicting where technology was going. Apple would need to stay on top of developing components for

Introduced in a nearly \$4,000 desktop aimed at video and design professionals, Apple's highest-end M1 Ultra chip has 114 billion transistors.

next-generation products while pumping out hundreds of millions of devices a year.

"I don't do it once and call it a day," Mr. Srouji said. "It is year after year after year. That's a huge effort."

In the end, Apple decided to expand its iPhone-chip strategy to Macs, building a scalable architecture of silicon from chips in the iPhone to ones used in computers and working to ensure that its software would work natively on day one. An army of third-party software developers were already familiar with its chips, helping the transition, and Apple would develop technology so that Macs with M1 chips would be able to use programs developed for Intel-powered Macs.

A former engineering manager said Mr. Srouji's team had become central to product development and his influence quietly grew over the years, especially as he demonstrated the ability to balance engineering needs and business imperatives.

Over the years, Apple spent bil-

ions between R&D investment and acquiring smaller companies to bolster its chip team, including Palo Alto Semiconductor, known for its abilities with microprocessors that consume small amounts of power.

Since 2015, Mr. Srouji has been part of Apple Chief Executive Tim Cook's small cadre of direct reports. In 2019, he was rumored to be in the running to return to Intel as CEO as that company stumbled.

Outside of Apple's Cupertino, Calif., headquarters, Mr. Srouji is a self-proclaimed car enthusiast with a taste for German engineering. He likes his cars like his chips, he said: "Fast and furious."

Among his managers and third parties, Mr. Srouji is known for demanding hard truths with the axiom that his meetings focus on problems, not successes.

Aart de Geus, CEO of Synopsys Inc., which helps Apple and other companies with silicon performance, says that in every meeting he can recall with Mr. Srouji, the executive has pushed participants to continue improving. "They're only interested in the best," said Mr. de Geus.

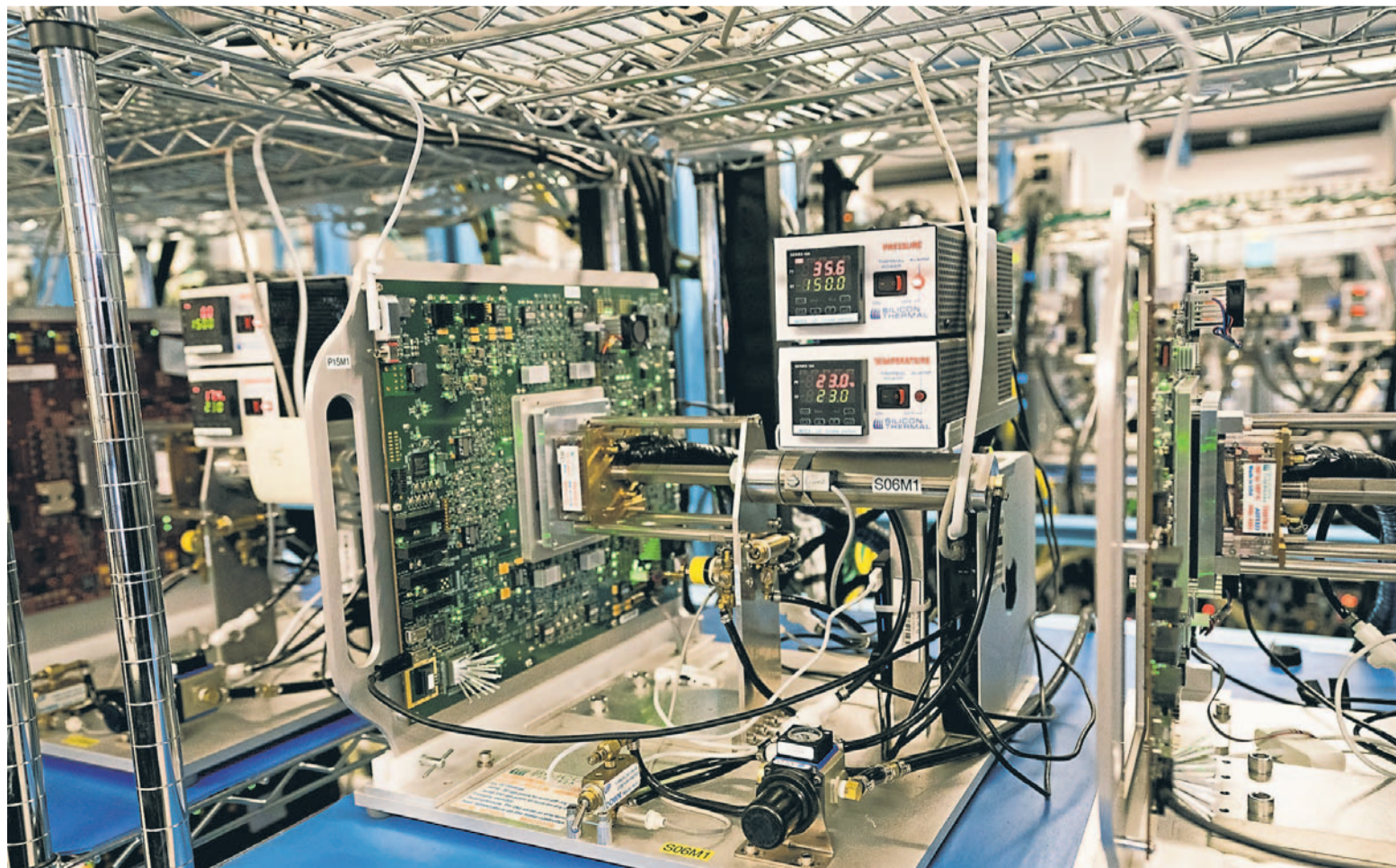
As the chips passed final validation in 2020, production could begin at factories run by Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., the silicon-fabricating giant that also makes chips for Intel. The arrangement let Apple reduce costs associated with buying chips from a supplier like Intel, said Mr. Lam, the analyst at CCS Insight. "They're clearly saving money," he said.

The first computers to get the M1 chips were MacBook Air and Mac Mini models that went on sale soon after, followed in 2021 by higher-performance computers offered with M1 Pro and M1 Max. The first M1 chip had 16 billion transistors.

That figure would grow larger with more capable versions of the M1. The M1 Ultra, introduced in the \$3,999 version of the MacStudio computer this past March, has 114 billion transistors and has a graphic-processing unit that's eight times the size of the one in the original M1.

In classic Apple style, Mr. Srouji remained mum on what the future might hold, including whether Apple has developed its own powerful processor for an autonomous car, similar to what Tesla has developed.

"I'm not going to talk about any of that," he said laughing.



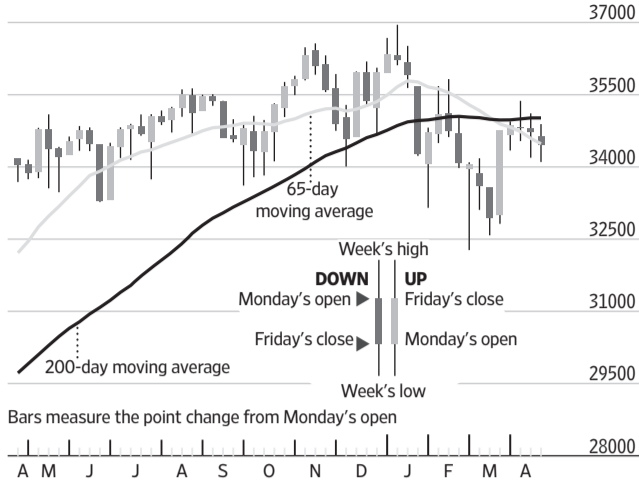
Apple chips being tested in a lab at the computer maker's headquarters in Cupertino, Calif.—a process that was made more difficult by pandemic restrictions.

MARKETS DIGEST

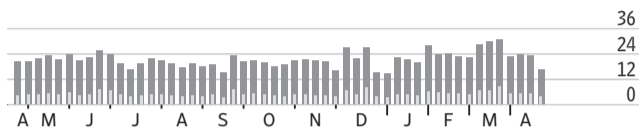
Dow Jones Industrial Average

34451.23 ▼269.89, or 0.78% last week
 Trailing P/E ratio 19.14 30.60
 P/E estimate * 18.20 21.48
 Dividend yield 2.05 1.75
 All-time high 36799.65, 01/04/22

Current divisor 0.15172752595384



NYSE weekly volume, in billions of shares



*Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birinyi Associates Inc.; †Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

Major U.S. Stock-Market Indexes

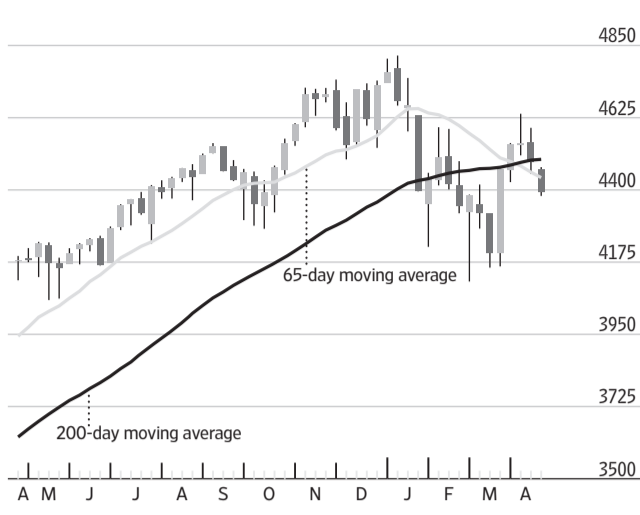
	High	Low	Latest Week Close	Net chg	% chg	Low	52-Week Close (●)	High	% chg	YTD	3-yr. ann.
Dow Jones											
Industrial Average	34889.17	34102.81	34451.23	-269.89	-0.78	32632.64	●	36799.65	1.2	-5.2	9.3
Transportation Avg	14951.43	14382.19	14844.14	373.42	2.58	14000.78	●	17039.38	-0.6	-9.9	10.8
Utility Average	1073.37	1052.95	1061.63	-9.21	-0.86	869.74	●	1070.93	15.7	8.2	10.7
Total Stock Market	45182.48	44246.18	44429.53	-794.03	-1.76	42165.09	●	48929.18	1.9	-8.6	14.0
Barron's 400	1007.16	983.05	994.37	2.02	0.20	962.48	●	1127.2	-0.3	-10.1	11.5
Nasdaq Stock Market											
Nasdaq Composite	13685.95	13317.74	13351.08	-359.92	-2.63	12581.22	●	16057.44	-4.9	-14.7	18.7
Nasdaq-100	14264.74	13882.75	13893.21	-434.05	-3.03	13001.63	●	16573.34	-0.9	-14.9	22.1
S&P											
500 Index	4471.00	4381.34	4392.59	-95.69	-2.13	4063.04	●	4796.56	5.3	-7.8	14.7
MidCap 400	2661.93	2595.19	2628.61	11.52	0.44	2517.18	●	2910.7	-2.7	-7.5	10.2
SmallCap 600	1300.82	1264.05	1284.28	11.44	0.90	1252.49	●	1466.02	-4.4	-8.4	9.8
Other Indexes											
Russell 2000	2034.22	1976.59	2004.98	10.42	0.52	1931.29	●	2442.74	-11.2	-10.7	8.2
NYSE Composite	16693.48	16419.08	16511.51	-178.44	-1.07	15625.93	●	17353.76	2.4	-3.8	8.4
Value Line	630.51	616.85	622.87	0.71	0.11	596.67	●	696.4	-5.6	-7.3	4.2
NYSE Arca Biotech	5305.49	5105.32	5228.03	-77.46	-1.46	4677.66	●	6022.37	-5.8	-5.3	1.3
NYSE Arca Pharma	893.97	857.98	863.52	-23.75	-2.68	700.69	●	887.27	23.2	4.4	13.9
KBW Bank	122.04	116.39	116.73	-3.06	-2.55	116.73	●	147.56	-4.7	-11.7	5.5
PHLX [®] Gold/Silver	168.55	161.15	167.76	4.09	2.50	117.06	●	167.76	13.2	26.7	30.3
PHLX [®] Oil Service	85.91	79.88	85.45	3.176	3.86	48.31	●	85.45	62.6	62.1	-4.7
PHLX [®] Semiconductor	3145.75	3026.77	3028.22	-91.94	-2.95	2851.15	●	4039.51	-7.4	-23.3	26.5
Cboe Volatility	25.38	20.85	22.70	1.54	7.28	15.01	●	36.45	37.0	31.8	23.6

[§]Nasdaq PHLX

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

S&P 500 Index

4392.59 ▼95.69, or 2.13% last week
 Trailing P/E ratio * 24.82 46.92
 P/E estimate * 19.62 23.49
 Dividend yield * 1.42 1.42
 All-time high 4796.56, 01/03/22

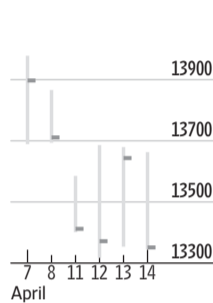


Track the Markets
 Compare the performance of selected global stock indexes, bond ETFs, currencies and commodities at [WSJ.com/TrackTheMarkets](https://www.wsj.com/TrackTheMarkets)

NOTICE TO READERS
 U.S. financial markets were closed Good Friday, April 15. They resume Monday, April 18.

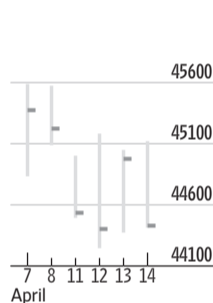
Nasdaq Composite

▼ **359.92**, or -2.63% last week



DJ US TSM

▼ **794.03**, or -1.76% last week



Track the Markets: Winners and Losers

A look at how selected global stock indexes, bond ETFs, currencies and commodities performed around the world for the week.

Stock index	Currency, vs. U.S. dollar	Commodity, traded in U.S.*	Exchange-traded fund
Nymex natural gas			16.28%
Nymex ULSD			16.19
Nymex crude			8.84
Nymex RBOB gasoline			7.98
Bloomberg Commodity Index			4.76
Wheat			4.28
Comex silver			3.51
Corn			2.80
Dow Jones Transportation Average			2.58
Comex gold			1.51
IBEX 35			1.08
S&P SmallCap 600			0.90
Lean hogs			0.86
S&P 500 Materials			0.69
CAC-40			0.63
S&P/ASX 200			0.61
WSJ Dollar Index			0.59
Mexico peso			0.54
South African rand			0.52
Russell 2000			0.52
S&P MidCap 400			0.44
S&P 500 Industrials			0.43
NIKKEI 225			0.40
S&P 500 Energy			0.32
UK pound			0.20
FTSE MIB			0.17
S&P 500 Consumer Staples			0.15
iSh 1-3 Treasury			0.14
Indonesian rupiah			0.13
South Korean won			0.01
iShiBoxx\$HYCp			unch.
Swiss franc			unch.
Comex copper			-0.06
S&P/TSX Comp			-0.09
Chinese yuan			-0.10
Euro STOXX			-0.15
KOSPI Composite			-0.16
STOXX Europe 600			-0.25
iSh TIPS Bond			-0.38
Soybeans			-0.40
Canada dollar			-0.49
Indian rupee			-0.51
Euro area euro			-0.57
Russian ruble			-0.62
VangdTotIntlBd			-0.66
iSh 7-10 Treasury			-0.68
FTSE 100			-0.69
VangdTotalBd			-0.71
iShNatIMuniBd			-0.72
Dow Jones Industrial Average			-0.78
S&P 500 Consumer Discr			-0.81
DAX			-0.84
Australian dollar			-0.88
S&P/BMV IPC			-0.94
Norwegian krone			-1.10
S&P 500 Utilities			-1.14
Shanghai Composite			-1.25
iShJPMUSEmgBd			-1.49
iShiBoxx\$InvGrdCp			-1.55
Hang Seng			-1.62
Japanese yen			-1.70
BOVESPA Index			-1.81
S&P 500 Real Estate			-1.86
S&P BSE Sensex			-1.86
S&P 500			-2.13
Nasdaq Composite			-2.63
S&P 500 Financials			-2.65
S&P 500 Health Care			-2.93
S&P 500 Communication Svcs			-3.00
Nasdaq-100			-3.03
iSh 20+ Treasury			-3.49
S&P 500 Information Tech			-3.82

*Continuous front-month contracts

Sources: FactSet (stock indexes, bond ETFs, commodities), Tullett Prebon (currencies).

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

International Stock Indexes

Region/Country	Index	Close	Latest Net chg	% chg	YTD % chg
World	MSCI ACWI	690.21	-0.50	-0.07	-8.6
	MSCI ACWI ex-USA	314.73	-0.60	-0.19	-8.6
	MSCI World	2959.67	-0.97	-0.03	-8.4
	MSCI Emerging Markets	1112.90	-4.46	-0.40	-9.7
Americas	MSCI AC Americas	1686.84	...	unch.	-7.7
Canada	S&P/TSX Comp	21855.70	...	Closed	3.0
Latin Amer.	MSCI EM Latin America	2588.70	...	unch.	21.5
Brazil	BOVESPA	116181.61	...	Closed	10.8
Chile	S&P IPSA	3172.22	...	Closed	13.0
Mexico	S&P/BMV IPC	54172.62	...	Closed	1.7
EMEA	STOXX Europe 600	459.82	...	Closed	-5.7
Eurozone	Euro STOXX	430.30	...	Closed	-10.1
Belgium	Bel-20	4216.29	...	Closed	-2.2
Denmark	OMX Copenhagen 20	1777.96	...	Closed	-4.6
France	CAC 40	6589.35	...	Closed	-7.9
Germany	DAX	14163.85	...	Closed	-10.8
Israel	Tel Aviv	2026.33	...	Closed	2.4
Italy	FTSE MIB	24862.35	...	Closed	-9.1
Netherlands	AEX	719.70	...	Closed	-9.8
Russia	RTS Index	955.46	14.41	1.53	-40.1
South Africa	FTSE/JSE All-Share	73382.83	...	Closed	-0.4
Spain	IBEX 35	8699.00	...	Closed	-0.2
Sweden	OMX Stockholm	879.82	...	Closed	-15.2
Switzerland	Swiss Market	12475.08	...	Closed	-3.1
Turkey	BIST 100	2494.37	18.96	0.77	34.3
U.K.	FTSE 100	7616.38	...	Closed	3.1
U.K.	FTSE 250	21121.61	...	Closed	-10.0
Asia-Pacific	MSCI AC Asia Pacific	173.92	-0.75	-0.43	-9.9
Australia	S&P/ASX 200	7523.40	...	Closed	1.1
China	Shanghai Composite	3211.24	-14.40	-0.45	-11.8
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	21518.08	...	Closed	-8.0
India	S&P BSE Sensex	58338.93	...	Closed	0.1
Japan	NIKKEI 225	27093.19	-78.81	-0.29	-5.9
Singapore	Straits Times	3335.85	...	Closed	6.8
South Korea	KOSPI	2716.71	...	Closed	-8.8
Taiwan	TAIEX	17004.18	-241.47	-1.40	-6.7
Thailand	SET	1674.34	...	Closed	1.0

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Commodities and Currencies

	Last Week Close	Net chg	% chg	YTD % chg
DJ Commodity	1230.16	46.96	3.97	30.01
Refinitiv/CC CRB Index	311.92	13.72	4.60	34.23
Crude oil, \$ per barrel	106.95	8.69	8.84	42.20
Natural gas, \$/MMBtu	7.300	1.022	16.28	95.71
Gold, \$ per troy oz.	1970.90	29.30	1.51	7.85
U.S. Dollar Index	100.50	0.70	0.71	4.72
WSJ Dollar Index	92.82	0.55	0.59	3.65
Euro, per dollar	0.9248	0.005	0.57	5.17
Yen, per dollar	126.45	2.15	1.73	9.86
U.K. pound, in dollars	1.31	0.003	0.20	-3.46

	52-Week Low	Close (●)	High	% chg
DJ Commodity	831.69	●	1264.48	47.87
Refinitiv/CC CRB Index	193.21	●	311.92	60.90
Crude oil, \$ per barrel	61.35	●	123.70	68.53
Natural gas, \$/MMBtu	2.658	●	7.300	174.64

BIGGEST 1,000 STOCKS

How to Read the Stock Tables

The following explanations apply to NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE American and Nasdaq Stock Market listed securities. Prices are composite quotations that include primary market trades as well as trades reported by Nasdaq BX (formerly Boston), Chicago Stock Exchange, Cboe, NYSE National and Nasdaq ISE.

The list comprises the 1,000 largest companies based on market capitalization. Underlined quotations are those stocks with large changes in volume compared with the issue's average trading volume. Boldfaced quotations highlight those issues whose price changed by 5% or more from their previous closing price was \$2 or higher.

Footnotes:
+New 52-week high.
-NNew 52-week low.
-ddIndicates loss in the most recent four quarters.
-FDFirst day of trading.
-HDoes not meet continued listing standards.
-IFLate filing.
-qTemporary exemption from Nasdaq requirements.
-TNYSE bankruptcy.
-vTrading halted on primary market.
-vJIn bankruptcy or receivership or being reorganized under the Bankruptcy Code, or securities assumed by such companies.

Stock tables reflect composite regular trading as of 4 p.m. and changes in the closing prices from 4 p.m. of the previous day.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for Thursday, April 14, 2022 and A B C.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for D E F and G H I.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for J K L and M N O.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for P Q R and S T U.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for V W X and Y Z A.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for B C D and E F G.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for H I J and K L M.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for N O P and Q R S.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for T U V and W X Y.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for Z A B and C D E.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for F G H and I J K.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for L M N and O P Q.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for R S T and U V W.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for X Y Z and A B C.

Table with columns: YTD %Chg, 52-Week Hi, Lo, Stock, Yld, PE, Net Chg. Includes sub-tables for D E F and G H I.

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Bonds | wsj.com/market-data/bonds/benchmarks

Global Government Bonds: Mapping Yields

Yields and spreads over or under U.S. Treasuries on the benchmark two-year and 10-year government bonds in selected other countries; arrows indicate whether the yield rose(▲) or fell(▼) in the latest session

Table with columns: Country/, Maturity, Latest(%)2-10, 1, 2, 3, Previous, Monthago, Yearago, Spread/Over U.S. Treasuries, in basis points, Latest, Prev, Yearago.

Yield (%)

Table with columns: Coupon, Maturity, in years, Latest(%)2-10, 1, 2, 3, Previous, Monthago, Yearago.

Amount Payable/Record

Table with columns: Company, Symbol, Yld, Div, New/Old, Frq, Record.

Dividend Changes

Table with columns: Company, Symbol, Yld, Div, New/Old, Frq, Record.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Asian Indexes Fall, U.S. Markets Closed

Dow, S&P and Nasdaq down for week on inflation worries and slowdown prospects

By HARDIKA SINGH

Asian indexes fell Friday as U.S. stock markets and others world-wide were closed to finish a trading week shortened by Good Friday and other holidays.

In addition to U.S. stock markets, bond and commodities markets also were closed

Friday. Some Asian markets were open. Japan's Nikkei 225 ended the day down 0.3%, finishing the week up 0.4% to break a two-week losing streak.

The Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.4%, ending the week down 1.25%. The People's Bank of China on Friday relaxed a key bank lending constraint while leaving benchmark interest rates unchanged.

Bitcoin edged up 1.3% on Friday to trade at \$40,408.68 from its Thursday 5 p.m. ET level. The cryptocurrency

gained 4.8% this week.

The three major U.S. stock indexes fell this week. Investors worried about rising inflation, consumer spending and the prospects of an economic slowdown. Earlier this week, data indicated U.S. inflation surged to a new four-decade high of 8.5% in March from the same month a year ago, driven by higher food and energy costs. Those concerns have ramped up pressure on the Federal Reserve to potentially raise interest rates by half a percentage point at its coming meeting.

The Dow industrials fell 269.89 points, or 0.8%, to 34451.23 this week. The S&P 500 lost 95.69 points, or 2.1%, to 4392.59. The technology-focused Nasdaq Composite dropped 359.92 points, or 2.6%, to 13351.08.

This week, earnings season kicked off with quarterly reports from banks and financial-services firms, which often are seen as proxies for the health of the U.S. economy. JPMorgan Chase, BlackRock and Wells Fargo fell this week after reporting a drop in profit, raising worries of an

economic downturn. Their results were pulled down because of comparisons to bumper profits during the pandemic.

Goldman Sachs, Citigroup and Morgan Stanley all added less than 1% this week. The KBW Nasdaq bank index fell 2.6% during the same period.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year U.S. Treasury note finished the week at 2.808%, its highest level since December 2018, with investors betting on rising interest rates. Bond yields and prices

move in opposite directions.

Brent crude, the international oil benchmark, moved back up to \$111.70 a barrel on Thursday after finishing last week at \$102.78.

Next week, investors will parse out jobless claims and home sales figures to better understand the direction of the U.S. economy.

Bank and financial-services earnings continue next week with Bank of America and Charles Schwab. Tesla, AT&T and Baker Hughes are also scheduled to report their quarterly results.

Visa, Mastercard Are Urged To Call Off Increases in Fees

By ANNA MARIA ANDRIOTIS

Sen. Dick Durbin and other lawmakers are urging Visa Inc. and Mastercard Inc. to scrap their planned card fee increases.

The two big payments networks are planning this month to raise the fees that many large merchants pay when they accept consumers' credit cards, The Wall Street Journal previously reported. In a letter sent to the networks Friday, lawmakers said the fee increases would ultimately trickle down to shoppers who are struggling with runaway inflation.

Higher costs are "the last thing American families deserve right now," wrote Mr. Durbin, an Illinois Democrat. The letter, which was reviewed by the Journal, was also signed by Republican Sen. Roger Marshall of Kansas, Democratic Rep. Peter Welch of Vermont, and Republican Rep. Beth Van Duyne of Texas.

The fees the lawmakers referenced aren't paid directly by consumers. Instead, clothing stores, restaurants and other merchants pay so-called interchange fees whenever a customer pays by card. Visa and Mastercard set interchange fees, which are pocketed by card issuers. Merchants can pass them along to customers in the form of higher prices.

Visa and Mastercard, the two largest card networks in the U.S., have said the fees help cover costs related to innovation and preventing fraud.

"Electronic payments play a critical role every day and have proven even more valuable since the start of the pandemic," a Mastercard spokesman said Friday. "And that's why we're seeing merchants encouraging their customers to use electronic forms of payment due to the significant value that they receive in return—a safe, convenient experience and a guaranteed payment."

Visa representatives weren't available for comment.

Many of the fee increases expected this month were delayed during the past two years because of the pandemic. Mr. Durbin and Mr. Welch have previously asked the networks to call off planned fee increases.

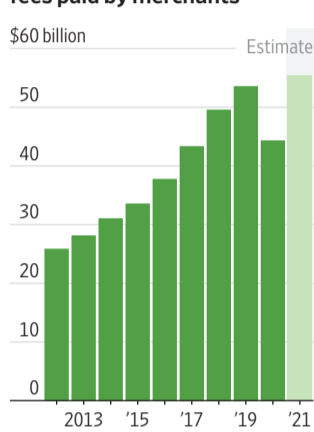
Visa and Mastercard's planned fee changes will include both increases and decreases.

Mastercard, for example, is lowering costs for all merchants with transactions below \$5, the spokesman said. Visa has previously said it will lower fees for some small businesses.

"The April adjustments will lower interchange fees for most small businesses. This letter is evidence that big box retailers don't like that," said Jeff Tassey, board chairman of the Electronic Payments Coalition, which represents card networks and issuers.

U.S. merchants have been paying more in card fees in recent years. More customers are shopping with cards, and more people are using cards

Visa and Mastercard credit-card interchange fees paid by merchants



Source: The Nilson Report

with generous rewards programs, which often have higher interchange fees. U.S. merchants paid card issuers an estimated \$55.4 billion in Visa and Mastercard credit-card interchange fees last year, more than double the amount in 2012, according to the Nilson Report, a trade publication.

Mr. Durbin is a longtime critic of the two networks. He is the namesake of the Durbin amendment, a part of the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act that capped the interchange fees that merchants pay large banks when customers shop with debit cards.

Visa and Mastercard handled about 85% of all debit-card spending last year that occurred on cards issued in the U.S., according to the Nilson Report. Visa and Mastercard's credit cards made up about 72% of spending on U.S.-issued credit cards.

AmEx Sales Pitches Are Scrutinized

Continued from page B1

continuing to cooperate with our regulators and government agencies."

"As we said in November, we engaged an external law firm to conduct an investigation of our small business sales practices in the U.S.," he added. AmEx "will take further steps as appropriate."

AmEx previously said that it discontinued wire services associated with the pitch. These had been available to a range of companies, according to people familiar with the matter.

Last month, AmEx sales employees were told that the company was discontinuing a payments service for McDonald's Corp. franchise owners associated with the tax pitch, according to people familiar with the matter.

Such IRS investigations can take years. In an investigation like this, AmEx could decide to give the IRS the names of clients who signed up for the payments services, according to tax attorneys. AmEx could have to turn over the profits it made from the sales strategy, they said.

It couldn't be determined whether the IRS is examining any of the business owners' tax returns.

An IRS spokesman said the agency is prohibited by law from commenting on specific taxpayers.

The sales pitch that the IRS is investigating was previously described to the Journal by current and former employees, and in training and

sales documents reviewed by the Journal.

AmEx encouraged businesses, including eye doctors, McDonald's franchisees and payroll companies, to use AmEx to pay vendors and employees through wire or card transactions. Salespeople told the businesses that they could deduct the resulting fees as expenses, the Journal previously reported.

Salespeople also told the businesses they could transfer the rewards points they had earned to a certain AmEx card, and then the business owner could convert those points into untaxed cash, the Journal reported.

Rewards points generally aren't considered income for individuals who generate them when they make personal purchases. It is less clear-cut when there is a separation between the entity earning the reward—the busi-

Businesses were told they could convert rewards points into untaxed cash.

ness—and the individual receiving the awards.

A whistleblower filed a report with the IRS last summer alleging that AmEx knowingly persuaded business owners to underreport their income and taxes, the Journal previously reported. The IRS allows whistleblowers to get a share of taxes the government collects because of information they provide.

AmEx has in recent weeks terminated at least a handful of vice presidents who oversaw sales teams that pitched the strategy, according to people familiar with the matter.

Other federal agencies already were probing AmEx over the way the company sells cards.

The Journal reported in 2020 that AmEx employees, under pressure to hit aggressive sales goals, misrepresented the costs and benefits of AmEx business cards to business owners.

The Justice Department's civil fraud and criminal divisions are investigating AmEx's business-card sales practices, as are the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency and the inspectors general offices of the Treasury Department, Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. and Federal Reserve.

AmEx has said it is cooperating.

The IRS is working with at least some of those agencies, according to people familiar with the matter. The agency is examining allegations that AmEx salespeople used fake tax-identification numbers when filling out card applications for small businesses, they said. Those numbers are also known as TINs or employer identification numbers.

Higher-ups told salespeople that many small-business owners don't immediately know their TINs, and that using a dummy number like 123456789 could keep the application moving, according to the people familiar with the matter. The practice occurred from at least 2014 until 2018, they said.

An AmEx spokesman said the company no longer allows this practice. "Several years ago we allowed existing small business card members, who wanted additional American Express cards and did not have their business' tax identification number readily available, to apply for a new card by populating the application with a temporary number," he said.

Brown-Forman Revamps Tech Leadership

By SUMAN BHATTACHARYYA

Jack Daniel's whiskey maker Brown-Forman Corp. in March restructured its technology leadership around the supply chain, which its chief financial officer has identified as a source of pressure.

For Brown-Forman, glass-supply pressures were the largest driver of supply-chain disruption, Leanne Cunningham, senior vice president and chief financial officer, said in its third-quarter earnings call last month. The Louisville, Ky.-based company is facing cost pressures from rising commodity prices, including agave and grain, she noted.

"Our cost increases have been driven by our efforts to minimize the impact of the supply chain disruptions largely related to the glass supply constraints," Ms. Cunningham said during the call.

Tim Nall, the company's former chief information officer, was promoted March 2 to senior vice president, chief global supply chain and technology officer. He reports to



For Brown-Forman, glass-supply pressures were a big disruption.

Chief Executive Officer Lawson Whiting. On March 16, the company named Dan Muraski as CIO.

Mr. Muraski, a company veteran of more than 12 years, said he plans to focus on supply-chain efficiency, as well as data-analytics capabilities. "We can better inform our supply chain with better planning, so to me that is probably the number one place where technology can play a role," Mr. Muraski said. "There are probably things we could do to our processes around plan-

ning and ordering that we could do better."

Sailaja Kotra-Turner was named the company's first chief information security officer on March 16. She reports to Mr. Nall. Ms. Kotra-Turner joined the company in September 2020 as global director of information-technology security and governance.

Glass-supply shortages affected the beverage industry as demand increased during the pandemic, said Andrea Teixeira, a J.P. Morgan senior equity research analyst.

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HEARD ON THE STREET

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

Is Globalization Unraveling?

The flow of trade and ideas between countries isn't inevitably headed toward decline. But it could change.

"Globalization is not something we can hold off or turn off," former President Bill Clinton told an audience in Vietnam in 2000. "It is the economic equivalent of a force of nature—like wind or water."

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it is an unwinding of globalization that gets spoken of with the same air of inevitability. The steady increases in the flows of trade, money, people and ideas among countries since the end of World War II seems destined to go into reverse during an extended period of Balkanization, with Russia and its allies operating in one sphere, China in another and the U.S.—and its allies—in a third. In short, the world could be in for something like what happened just over a century ago, when World War I, the Russian Revolution and, yes, a global pandemic provoked countries to turn inward.

For investors, this prospect is unsettling. They have been some of globalization's biggest winners,

particularly during the period of hyperglobalization that began in the 1990s, with the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, the transformation of China into an economic powerhouse and the advent of the internet. Increased trade allowed countries to focus on making the goods and services they were best equipped to produce, and provided multinational companies with new customers and new pools of low-cost labor to tap. Transformative technologies that during the Cold War might have been kept locked away by governments and militaries instead made their way to the marketplace. Many benefits flowed to companies' bottom lines: In the U.S., for example, after-tax corporate profits as a percentage of gross domestic product went from 5% in 1990 to 10.5% last year.

Just as the path toward a more globalized world isn't inevitable, however, neither is globalization inevitably going into retreat. True, the invasion of Ukraine could be characterized as Russian President Vladimir Putin lashing out at the cosmopolitan, globalized Western world. On the other hand, the vigor with which Ukrainians are defending their country, and their desire to become more integrated with the rest of Europe, serve as a reminder that globalization's benefits can extend beyond mere economics. Perhaps what the coming years might bring is not an end to globalization, but a reshaping of some terms, with investors continuing to enjoy its benefits, but also bearing more of its costs.

Russia's isolation does not count as anything like the blow against globalization struck in World War I, when "[m]oved by insane delusion and reckless self-regard, the German people over-



JAMES STEINBERG

turned the foundations on which we all lived and built," as economist John Maynard Keynes put it in "The Economics Consequences of the Peace," the 1919 book warning what the collapse of European integration might portend.

Adjusting for the differing costs of goods and services across countries, Germany's economy in 1913 accounted for 8.7% of global GDP, according to estimates by economic historian Angus Maddison. Russia's share of global GDP last year was just 3.1% on that basis, estimates the International Monetary Fund, and an even smaller 1.7% in dollar terms. More important, Germany before World War I was at the nexus of European trade. Russia's role in the European economy, in contrast, is primarily as a provider of oil and other commodities, and it plays a minor role in global supply chains.

China is, of course, a far more important global economic player than Russia. In dollar terms it accounted for more than a sixth of

global GDP last year, according to IMF estimates, and the importance of its role in global supply chains has been made painfully apparent over the course of the pandemic. Its economy is also hugely dependent on trade with the rest of the world, and particularly with developed economies such as the U.S. Were it to decide to somehow unshackle itself from the global system, perhaps due to a future conflict over Taiwan, the economic and societal impacts on its own domestic system would be huge. The hope is that, seeing the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, this is something its leaders would prefer not to countenance.

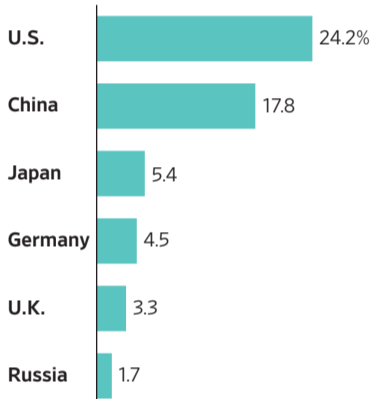
The bigger threat to globalization, and the more important lesson from Russia, might be that in its more recent stages it has left too many people behind. Many Russians went from embracing free markets following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 to feeling betrayed by them by the time of the 1998 Russian debt crisis—a

change that helped lay the groundwork for Mr. Putin's rise to power. In the developed world, many benefits from globalization that companies and their investors accrued haven't been sufficiently passed to much of the general population, worsening inequality and breeding contempt. Wage gains that are raising companies' labor costs and pressuring profit margins might be difficult for investors to swallow, but might also help foster a recognition of what globalization is good for.

There might be other changes to globalization's dynamics. The shortages the pandemic induced and the Russian invasion bring home how becoming over-reliant on a single country's production, be it of microprocessors or of natural gas, can be dangerous. Perhaps there will be a recognition that globalization is neither a fait accompli nor a magic wand that can in and of itself lead to a more prosperous future.

—Justin Lahart

Countries' estimated share of global gross domestic product in 2021



Note: In U.S. dollar terms
Source: International Monetary Fund



Tobacco investors should keep an eye on prices at the gas pump, which could depress cigarette sales.

Feeling the Burn Of Higher Gas Prices

Cigarette sales drop as fuel costs rise

Smokers have puffed their way through multiple increases in the price of a pack of cigarettes over the past two years. What is happening at the gas pump may soon force them to cut back.

The volume of cigarettes sold in the U.S. over the four weeks through March 26 fell 9.4% from the year-earlier period, data from Nielsen shows. This is a deterioration from February's already weak volumes, which slipped 7.9% year-over-year.

Tobacco sales have been volatile throughout the pandemic but the cost of gas is probably having an impact, too. Historically, U.S. cigarette volumes have moved inversely to fuel prices. Drivers are currently paying \$4.10 a gallon on average, according to GasBuddy data. Prices have come down from highs seen in March, but a gallon today is still roughly 40% more expensive than it was this time last year—multiples of the 8.5% rate of overall inflation.

Pricier gas has an outside impact on demand for cigarettes. Smokers tend to have lower in-

comes, so fuel costs take up a greater share of their disposable spending. Smoking prevalence among people earning less than \$35,000 a year is 21.4% compared with just 7.1% for those earning more than \$100,000.

Cigarette sales are also sensitive to gasoline prices as the two

At least 60% of U.S. tobacco purchases are made in gas stations, said one analyst.

are often purchased together. At least 60% of U.S. tobacco purchases are made in gas stations, according to Vivien Azer, an analyst at Cowen. Higher prices at the pump discourage impulse spending in gas station convenience stores.

Pinched smokers are already trading down. The cheapest cigarette brands took 1.4 percentage

points of market share from more expensive tobacco like Marlboro in the fourth quarter of 2021 compared with a year earlier, based on Cowen data. Recent price increases by big tobacco firms may accelerate the trend. **British American Tobacco**, which makes Lucky Strike cigarettes, and Marlboro manufacturer **Altria** have increased prices eight and seven times, respectively, over the past two years, UBS notes. Historically, the two companies have raised prices around twice annually.

Big tobacco companies are probably willing to sacrifice some market share in old-school smokes to maximize their profits. Cigarette companies are pouring billions of dollars into noncombustible products such as heated tobacco sticks and vape pens. This shift to so-called reduced risk products must be funded by their highly lucrative legacy business. Higher gas prices make it trickier to squeeze smokers for more cash to fund innovation without losing them to cheaper rivals.

Tobacco stocks are performing well regardless. BAT is up almost one-fifth this year, while Altria has gained 16%. Even after the rally, their dividend yields are 7%—more than quadruple the S&P 500 average. Generous payouts and the perceived defensive nature of tobacco stocks will remain a big lure, but investors should keep one eye on prices at the pump.

—Carol Ryan

The Sinking Of Shipping Stocks

The container industry starts to lose ballast provided by U.S. consumers and China

Container shipping rates have started sinking. This might only be the beginning of their descent.

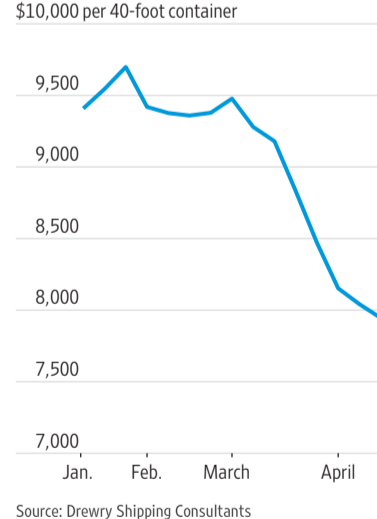
A steady fall in the World Container Index compiled by London-based Drewry Shipping Consultants is the latest hint that Americans—and developed world consumers more generally—might be starting to spend less on goods as fiscal stimulus drains away, inflation at a four-decade high eats into wage gains, reopening economies shift back toward services and the Fed initiates aggressive rate increases. Another factor might be the lockdown in Shanghai, which appears to be disrupting the flow of goods out of China—meaning less need for container shipping.

The World Container Index is down 16% since the beginning of the year, with key routes Shanghai to Los Angeles and Shanghai to New York down 17% and 16%, respectively. But most striking is the steep fall since March 10—the WCI is down 13% since that date alone. That suggests that either spring retail sales data in the U.S. will hold some nasty surprises or that the large Covid-19 outbreak in China, which really started to gain steam around mid-March, is already having an even bigger impact on global supply chains than many appreciate.

Shipping companies have started employing "void sailings," where ships continue to sail but don't load or discharge containers at ports, to reduce their supply on offer, and therefore support rates, according to George Griffiths, who covers the global container shipping market at S&P Global Commodity Insights.

While the WCI is still far higher than it was before the pandemic, the trajectory will likely remain downward with significant new ship supply setting sail by the end of this year. The boom in container rates over the past two years was driven by the switch away from services toward goods owing to

Drewry's World Container Index, year-to-date



Source: Drewry Shipping Consultants

the pandemic and government stimulus. But if Americans really are beginning to tighten their belts now, shipping rates might see only a modest pickup when China's lockdowns end.

The cost to ship bulk goods such as grain—which are facing more disruption from the war in Ukraine—has also fallen since mid-March. But the Baltic Dry Index, a barometer of that part of the shipping world, has performed better overall in 2022. It is still roughly flat for the year.

Container shipping stocks meanwhile, are a mixed bag. **A.P. Moller-Maersk** is down about 20% since mid-March. **Evergreen Marine** and **Cosco**, which also operates other types of vessels, have also struggled but fared somewhat better. If China's lockdowns don't ease soon and U.S. consumers don't step up to bat, investors in the sector, and perhaps more broadly in retail, may ultimately wish they had abandoned ship earlier.

—Megha Mandavia



Reef Insurance
Marine habitats are getting protection from new financial instruments **C3**

REVIEW

The Perfect Sound
The life and quest of an insatiable audiophile **Books C7**



CULTURE | SCIENCE | POLITICS | HUMOR

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Saturday/Sunday, April 16 - 17, 2022 | **C1**



The Everyday Patriotism Of Diverse Democracies

In the most despairing months of World War II, when the planes of the Wehrmacht were raining bombs upon London, and the Nazis seemed destined to rule vast swaths of Europe, George Orwell set out to write about a surprising subject: the virtues of patriotism.

Orwell was as aware of the destructive potential of nationalism as any of his compatriots. A few years earlier, he had joined an international band of idealists to defend the Spanish Republic against its fascist enemies. “The energy that actually shapes the world,” Orwell warned those who still dismissed Adolf Hitler as too absurd to pose a real threat, “springs from emotions—racial pride, leader worship, religious belief, love of war—which liberal intellectuals mechanically write off as anachronisms.”

But it is precisely because Orwell knew how powerfully such emotions drive politics, and how destructive they can become when they are al-

Civic principles matter, but love of country in the modern West is largely based on affection for ordinary life, from food and holiday customs to sports teams and local geography.

By Yascha Mounk

lowed to fester, that he defended a constructive form of patriotism. “What has kept England on its feet during the past year?” he asked. In the main, he answered, it was “the atavistic emotion of patriotism.”

Orwell’s ambivalent case for patriotism is of renewed relevance today. When cruise missiles first homed in on their targets in Kyiv, much of the world assumed that Russian troops

would soon reach the Ukrainian capital. But to the astonishment of both Western intelligence analysts and the war’s architects in the Kremlin, Ukraine has so far managed to resist. Fueled by a collective determination to defend their homeland, however poor the odds, Ukrainian soldiers and civilians have been able to withstand brutal attacks by a much larger invading force.

But love of country can go wrong as readily today as it has in the past. In its most aggressive and exclusionary forms, nationalism can lead to the attacks on ethnic and religious outsiders that we have seen in western democracies, or even provide the pretext for one country to annex the territory of another. Vladimir Putin, too, claims to be a patriot.

So how can defenders of democracy summon the power of patriotism without opening the door to prejudice and chauvinism? And do the citizens of deeply diverse countries like the United States even have

Please turn to page C2

Mr. Mounk is a professor of international affairs at Johns Hopkins University. This essay is adapted from his new book “The Great Experiment: Why Diverse Democracies Fall Apart and How They Can Endure,” which will be published on April 19 by Penguin Press.



Inside

WEEKEND CONFIDENTIAL

At 89, Antonia Fraser is publishing her 30th book and planning her next, still telling the stories of women who made history. **C6**

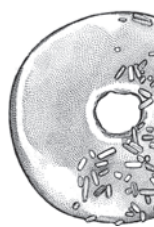


Aid Brigades

People from around the world have flocked to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees. **C4**

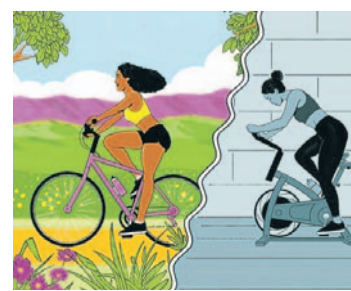
JASON GAY

The best way to get workers to return: an office doughnut. We happen to have one right here. **C6**



PSYCHOLOGY

Our high-tech tools give us ‘superpowers,’ but they often leave us feeling empty. **C5**



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL BYERS; ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES (BOOKS)

REVIEW

A Patriotism of Common Experience

Continued from the prior page
enough in common to sustain a meaningful form of collective solidarity?

The most traditional form of nationalism emphasizes common descent. Advocates of an ethnic conception of patriotism argue that most nations are rooted in the history of particular peoples and should continue to recognize those who descend from its original inhabitants as having special standing.

But the changes of the past half-century, especially in democracies that experienced a high level of immigration, have made such an ethnic conception of nationalism impractical and destructive. Forever hailing the achievements of one part of the population, ethnic nationalism is unable to acknowledge to what extent most countries are now shaped by immigrants and their descendants. It fails to give members of modern democracies who belong to minority groups full credit for their contributions, making it far more difficult to sustain genuine solidarity in countries undergoing rapid demographic change.

Philosophers and politicians who recognize that ethnic nationalism cannot provide a sensible basis for a diverse democracy, but don't want to give up on patriotism altogether, usually make the case for a time-tested alternative: civic patriotism. To be proud to be an American, they say, is to love the ideals and institutions to which the country committed itself in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

The advantages of civic patriotism are significant. Unlike ethnic nationalism, it allows anybody who is willing to embrace a set of shared political values to become a full member of the community. So long as immigrants from such different places as Morocco, Thailand, Zimba-

Noble though the idea may be, civic patriotism will never fully describe what most people feel when they think of their country with love.

bwe and El Salvador agree to abide by the Constitution, they should be able to live together in peace—and become as American as a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant whose forefathers arrived on these shores hundreds of years ago.

There is also some reason to think that civic patriotism is less likely to draw countries into international conflict than ethnic forms of nationalism. A love of country that is based in a belief in the inherent superiority of one's own ethnic or racial group provides an easy excuse for those who want to dismiss the legitimate interests of other nations. But a nation that is founded



Members of Scotland's Sikh community play bagpipes during the festival of Vaisakhi in Glasgow, April 9, 2017.

on the importance of self-determination should be able to recognize that other countries also have a legitimate interest in ruling themselves. Civic patriotism should be better able than ethnic nationalism to welcome newcomers into the fold and sustain meaningful international cooperation.

For all of those reasons, the idea of civic patriotism strongly appeals to me. It defines nations by their highest ideals rather than their basest instincts. And it gives citizens a way to take pride in their country without indulging in bigotry or chauvinism. If I didn't hesitate to swear an oath of citizenship when I became an American citizen five years ago, it is, in part, because I love the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the inspiration they have provided for civic patriotism, both at home and abroad.

Even so, I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that civic patriotism is at best a partial answer to the question of how contemporary democracies can sustain a common national identity. Patriotism is one of the most universal sentiments in the modern world. Most citizens of democracies feel it at least to some extent. But an interest in high-flown civic ideals and civic documents remains the preserve of a politically minded minority.

Noble though the idea may be, civic patriotism will never fully describe what most people feel when they think of their country with love or affection. In putting abstract political principles at the center of our collective sentiments, the notion of civic patriotism runs the danger of mischaracterizing a sentiment that is, at least as much, about our emotional attachment to real people and places. We need to complement the civic conception of patriotism with another dimension—one which recognizes the key role played by everyday culture.

In 1993 John Major, the prime minister of the United Kingdom, delivered a speech to reassure his country that a closer relationship

with Europe wouldn't alter its essential character. Even if parliament ratified the Maastricht Treaty, which established the European Union, he said, Britain would "still be the country of long shadows on county grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and pools fillers."

The speech was widely mocked: The idea that warm beer would forever define Britain seemed silly to many of his compatriots. Major's failure is no aberration. Whenever politicians try to define the nature of their country, they end up sounding cheesy, antiquated or both. It would be easy to conclude that these smart politicians and their well-paid speechwriters keep failing because they are trying to give voice to something that doesn't exist.

Yet as someone who has lived in five different countries, I am daily struck by the extent to which national cultures continue to differ from one another. Even in the European Union, where borders between member states have almost disappeared, nations continue to shape the "cultural scripts" that, as the sociologists Cliff Goddard and Anna Wierzbicka put it, set "background norms, templates, guidelines or models for ways of thinking, acting, feeling, and speaking."

When people say that they love their country, they aren't necessarily celebrating the ethnic links that unite members of the majority group. Nor need they be thinking about politics or the constitution. While politicians might, for lack of better words, invoke a lot of clichés

or historical symbols when making patriotic speeches, most people arrive at their cultural patriotism by a more direct and unpretentious route. Their love of country is deeply imbued with their appreciation of its everyday sights and smells and sounds and tastes. Their affection is for the things that make up everyday life: their fields and cities, dishes and customs, buildings and cultural scripts.

sense of solidarity with one another.

Many countries in the world are now in the middle of a contentious debate about how much commonality of spirit they can hope for. Some voices on the right claim that immigration and demographic change are destroying social cohesion. They believe that the historical success of countries like the U.S. depended on the religion or even the ethnicity of the majority group and will inevita-



German Chancellor Angela Merkel slices Döner kebab at a reception in Berlin, June 30, 2009.

There is a way to invoke culture that excludes newcomers and minority groups, that values purity over inclusion. For cultural traditionalists, Italy would cease being Italy if a greater number of Italians chose not to celebrate Christmas, and India would cease being India if most Indians started to celebrate Halloween. But in a diverse democracy, culture bears the mark of many different groups. When asked about their favorite foods, Germans are now more likely to mention a "foreign" dish like spaghetti Bolognese or Döner kebab than they are to go on about a "local" dish like Schweinshaxe. And when Americans think about dishes they love, they are as likely to list pizza and tacos as they are to talk about meat loaf or apple pie.

This living, breathing, ever-changing everyday culture is open to immigrants and ethnic minorities. Though minority groups often retain pride in elements of their ancestral culture, the vast majority of them are, simultaneously, perfectly comfortable with the cultural mainstream. In most diverse democracies, members of ethnic or religious minorities are among the most fervent fans of local sports teams and celebrities. They keenly celebrate nondenominational holidays like Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve. In some places, they are even appropriating the most traditional and stereotypical aspects of national culture for themselves: Scots of Indian extraction have taken to the kilt in considerable numbers, for example, while Bavarians with Turkish roots are increasingly likely to don lederhosen when they go to the Oktoberfest.

Skeptics may ask why anyone should love the culture of a particular modern nation state when all na-

bly erode as a result of its relative decline. Meanwhile, some voices on the left believe that the citizens of modern nations will forever be defined, first and foremost, by their religion or ethnicity. To hope that "whites" and "people of color" could subordinate their differences to a shared national identity, they say, is to be naive about the enduring force of racism.

Most people's affection is for the things that make up everyday life: fields and cities, dishes and customs, buildings and cultural scripts.

It is easy to see why this kind of pessimism is now in fashion. Deep racial injustices undoubtedly endure in virtually all countries. And with the share of residents born outside America higher than it has been at any point in living memory, cultural differences between immigrants and natives really can feel especially stark. Even so, it would be a dangerous mistake to overlook how much Americans who belong to different ethnic and religious groups have in common—or to give up on a future in which they might come to feel an even deeper kinship.



Fans watch the UEFA Euro 2020 round of 16 match between England and Germany at the Vinegar Yard pub in London, June 29, 2021.

REVIEW

Financing a Healthy Future for Coral Reefs

By JULI BERWALD

Coral reefs have an outsize influence on our planet. They occupy less than 1% of the ocean's habitat but are home to a quarter of all marine species, which provide protein in the form of seafood for up to a billion people globally. The combined value of food, recreation and protection from storms attributed to coral reefs has been calculated by the U.N. Environment Program at more than \$2.7 trillion a year. That doesn't include their cultural significance, yet-to-be discovered medical cures or the joy of living on the same planet as their extraordinary beauty and diversity.

Yet today's corals face a slew of threats. Fertilizer and sewage runoff, coastal development and illegal fishing all destroy coral. Most concerning, a warming planet disrupts the symbiotic relationship between coral and the algae that sustains it, resulting in the deterioration of reefs known as bleaching. Before the 1980s, mass bleaching was unknown. Since 2016, it has been documented every year. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that by 2050, 99% of reefs could be in critical condition.

Faced with intensifying threats, environmental advocates have developed a suite of novel financial innovations aimed at coral health. Around 2008, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the world's largest environmental nonprofit organization, recognized the potential of insurance as a tool for managing the financial impacts of a more severe climate. Coastal wetlands, for example, save the global insurance industry \$52 billion through reduced storm flooding, according to an estimate by the World Economic Forum.

Cancún, Mexico, a popular tourist region vulnerable to hurricanes, proved an ideal test case to explore the idea of insuring coral reefs. A study in 2014 showed that a healthy coral reef could absorb 97% of the energy produced by waves barreling toward land. By comparing the absorptive capacity of healthy and damaged reefs, it was possible to quantify the difference in storm damage in the two scenarios. Putting a dollar value on the reef made it possible to open discussions with local stakeholders, including the government, academia, national parks and the tourism sector, about protecting the reef with insurance.

In June 2019, the world's first insurance policy to protect a marine ecosystem was issued by Swiss Re, covering 100 miles of Cancun's reef and beach. Paid for by a trust established by the Mexican state of Quintana Roo with support from The Nature Conservancy, the policy was designed to pay out if wind speeds exceed 100 knots, avoiding the need for time-consuming damage assessment. When Hurricane Delta hit with 100-knot winds in October 2020, it triggered a nearly \$800,000 payout.

As soon as the weather calmed, a portion of the money was used to deploy divers known as reef brigades, who righted coral colonies and cemented them in place. By the end of December, the divers had stabilized 2,000 large colonies and secured 12,500 coral fragments to the



Mexican 'reef brigade' divers repair an insured coral reef damaged by Hurricane Delta, Oct. 2020.

New types of insurance policies and 'debt for nature' swaps are helping governments pay to protect their marine environments.

reef. Fernando Secaira, who oversees TNC's coastal risk and resilience effort for Mexico and the Mesoamerican reef, said that this success was followed up in June 2021 with another policy, implemented by U.K.-based brokerage Willis Towers Watson, to insure the coral reef in southern Mexico, Honduras and Belize. Studies are currently under way for similar policies in Indonesia, the Philippines, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Hawaii.

Restructured debt offers another opportunity to protect coral reefs. In 1998, the U.S. passed the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, which enabled the government to forgive the debt of developing countries in exchange for their efforts in conserving forest habitat. These "debt for nature" swaps generated \$339 million to protect and manage more than 67 million acres of forests in 14 countries, and leveraged an additional \$105 million in financing. In 2012, Ronald Jumeau, Seychelles' ambassador to the U.N., reached out to TNC with a similar plan, suggesting that in exchange for debt refinancing, the island country in the Indian Ocean would protect 30% of

its coastal waters.

After three years of negotiation with creditor countries, \$22 million in debt was partly reduced and the rest was bought by a trust established by TNC's investment arm NatureVest, along with philanthropic donors. Seychelles will repay the

In 2018, the Seychelles raised \$15 million by selling 'blue bonds' to fund coral reef restoration.

trust over 20 years in its own currency. "It was the first time that a debt swap like this for conservation had ever been negotiated," said Rob Weary, a NatureVest executive who worked on the deal and has since started his own company for marine conservation finance, Aqua Blue Investments.

In 2018, Seychelles set another first when it worked with the World Bank to structure the first bond for marine conservation. These "blue bonds" were modeled on land-based versions called green bonds, which are usually issued by governments that need to raise money for an environmental project. When the bond is repaid, the interest is often tax-free. The Seychelles raised \$15 million by selling blue bonds to three large investors, with the funds earmarked for management of the marine preserve and restoring coral reefs. In 2020, the president of Seychelles, Danny Faure, signed a decree protecting 154,000 square miles of ocean, about the size of California. Coastal protection helps create healthier reefs that will be better able to cope with climate change. A 2015 study of the effects of coastal protection in the Seychelles found that in protected areas, coral cover was 12% higher and the number of coral species 10% higher than in unprotected areas.

On the other side of the globe, Belize announced a debt swap in November 2021, in which government bonds worth \$554 million were

swapped for a "blue loan" worth \$364 million, syndicated by Credit Suisse and partly guaranteed by the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, in exchange for environmental commitments. The deal will allow the Caribbean country to increase its protected marine area from 15.9% to 30% of the coastline, and a portion of the repayment will be held in a trust that will be used to support the marine reserve. "While Seychelles was the pilot, Belize is proof of concept—at scale. And hopefully we can start to see two or three of these being done a year," Mr. Weary said.

The market's acceptance of novel financial tools linked to coral health suggests that the world is starting to recognize that reefs aren't just scientifically or emotionally significant, but quantifiably valuable. Blue bonds, debt for nature swaps, reef insurance and other new instruments show that it's possible to address environmental goals and business goals at the same time, paving the way for solutions to be found faster. For an ecosystem short on time, that's exactly what's needed.

Dr. Berwald is an ocean scientist. This essay is adapted from her new book, "Life on the Rocks: Building a Future for Coral Reefs," published by Riverhead.



WORD ON THE STREET
BEN ZIMMER

A Second Round in Politics or Horse Racing

IN FRANCE, THE FIRST round of the presidential election ended last Sunday with President Emmanuel Macron winning 28% of the vote and his closest rival, the far-right leader Marine Le Pen, garnering 23%. Under French electoral

rules, the two top candidates now head to a second-round runoff election, to be held on April 24.

[Runoff]

Meanwhile, in Texas, officials are gearing up for a runoff election on May 24, to decide

rules, the two top candidates now head to a second-round runoff election, to be held on April 24.

As with so much political terminology, from "running mate" to "vetting" to "upset," the origins of "runoff" can be found at the racetrack. In racing



but one run off the second day."

The same phrase appeared in accounts of horse-racing, with the noun "runoff" coming into use for a final deciding race, along the lines of a "playoff" in team sports. An 1887 dispatch in the Cincinnati Enquirer, for instance, told of "seven races and a run-off to settle a dead heat" in a thoroughbred event.

"Runoff" made the leap to politics about a decade later, as Democrats in Southern states experimented with new primary systems. Some historians argue the runoff system was an effort by white Democrats to consolidate power by tamping down party factions more sympathetic to enfranchising Black voters.

In May 1896, the Commercial Appeal of Memphis, Tenn., reported that Democratic county officials were adopting the "Mississippi plan": "Where no candidate gets a majority over all the other candidates the two highest men shall run off the contest in a second primary." A month later, the same newspaper carried an account of the "run-off primary election" between the top two Democratic vote-getters in the race for sheriff of Shelby County, Tenn.

Mississippi was the first to adopt a primary runoff system at the state level in 1902, followed by Texas the next year. Currently, 10 states, mostly in the South, have incorporated runoffs in their party primaries, with two—Georgia and Louisiana—requiring runoffs in their general elections when candidates fail to get more than 50% of the vote. (Georgia notably elected both of its U.S. senators, Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff, in runoffs last year.)

A newer wrinkle is "instant runoff voting," in which a second round of voting isn't required. Instead, voters rank their choices of candidates on the ballot so that a single winner can emerge after lower-ranked candidates are eliminated and their votes redistributed. While "instant runoffs" have been proposed in the U.S. since the 1990s, the preferred term for the system (embraced by a number of cities and states) is now "ranked-choice voting."

That may be a more sensible choice, but it lacks the evocative image of the winning candidate instantly running off with the victory.

REVIEW

WILCZEK'S UNIVERSE

FRANK WILCZEK

A Quantum Leap, With Strings Attached



COMPLEX information can be stored in many ways. Three methods—written human language, the binary code of computers and the DNA and RNA sequences of genetics—dominate today's technologies. But there is a beautiful, ancient method of storing and processing information that incorporates elements of all three and adds something unique: topology, the science of stable shapes and structures.

Quipu—meaning “knot”—served the Incan civilizations of the Andes well for centuries. In a slightly different form, it also flourished in China, Tibet and Japan. Though quipu is still used in remote Peruvian villages and valued as a cultural heritage, it is mostly regarded as a historical curiosity. For some physicists, however, it is becoming a creative inspiration.

The basic letters of quipu are knots made in strings. Typically, many strings are hung from a common cord. Several different kinds of knots are used, and their order and spacing is meaningful. Different colors of string get used, too, to set a context. Thus, on a blue string, two knots might represent “warrior” and “lamb,” while those knots on a red string represent “1,000” and “10”—a trick similar to how differentiated cells apply epigenetic variation to the four-letter codes of DNA.

Quipu has a lot going for it. It does not require the production of paper. The knots are less prone to getting smudged, erased or miscopied than other kinds of signals. The strings are lightweight and portable.

In traditional quipu, each string is independent (though they come in a definite order). They can be wound around one another, producing braids. The topological pattern of a braid—which strand passes over or under another—can be used to enrich the code. The knots can also encode spaces, or zeros, through their separation. A Harvard anthropologist has argued that the Inca used them as binary representations, centuries before computers.

Now, an exotic new form of quipu—



quantum quipu—is making headlines at the frontier of physics. To explain this ferment, I must describe the weird strings it is based on. These are not our ancestors' strings.

For decades, physicists have used the concept of “world-lines” to visualize the motion of particles. To keep things simple, let's suppose that our particles move on a horizontal plane and that we use the vertical direction to label time. That way, the history of how a particle moves becomes an ascending curve: its world-line. When we have several particles, their world-lines can get knotted up—or more precisely, they can form braids. There are certain particles, called anyons, whose quantum behavior keeps track of the braid that their world-lines form. The anyon world-lines form a quantum quipu.

I first named and analyzed some key properties of anyons about 40 years ago (the name was meant to suggest that “anything goes.”) Then, just two years ago, the existence of anyons was demonstrated experimentally by two different teams. The simple quantum quipus that were produced in those pioneering experiments can't store much information. But last month Microsoft researchers announced that they have engineered much more capable anyons. These could be the building blocks for an impressive quantum quipu.

Braids have several advantages in this work: They store exponentially more information as they bring in more strands and lengths, and their essential structure stays intact even if jostled—the intertwined strings' topology doesn't change. The result could be a topological quantum computer ready to take on otherwise intractable computational challenges, while evoking how the Inca recorded what they knew.



Displaced Ukrainians arrive by bus at a temporary refugee center in Przemysl, Poland, Mar. 16.

The Volunteers Who Rushed to Help Ukrainians

People from the U.S., Europe and elsewhere have felt compelled to travel to Poland to help refugees displaced by the war.

By TAMAR JACOBY

I'm not sure what gave me the idea. It might have been a news story about people volunteering to fight in Ukraine or driving to the border to pick up refugees. But once the seed was planted, there was little question in my mind. For reasons I'm still not sure I understand, I had to put my life in Washington, D.C., on hold and go to Poland. I had to try to help.

It wasn't easy to find a spot to volunteer, somewhere I could be useful. But now that I've made it to Krakow, I'm discovering a world of other people like me—international volunteers and Poles from all walks of life who feel compelled to pitch in where they can.

Tara Flynn, 43, took a few weeks off from her job at a London financial firm and traveled by herself to the border, where I found her serving grilled cheese sandwiches to hungry refugees walking out of Ukraine. Camilla Cabral, 25, is a Portuguese nurse who had a few weeks between jobs and wanted to “do some good.” When I met her, she was helping transients at the train station in Przemysl, about 10 miles from the frontier. Krakow residents Adam and Iwona Reichardt welcomed five homeless women and children—relatives of Ukrainian colleagues—into their apartment.

All the big international humanitarian organizations have a presence in the border region: the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, national and international Red Cross groups, the Jewish Federations of North America, CARE, Save the Children and many others. But most of these big NGOs are relying on professional staff, not volunteers, and many are working together with Polish groups rather than setting up operations of their own.

More striking and by all accounts unique to this war are the newer players. Some, like chef Jose Andres's World Central Kitchen, are global in scope but nimble and more entrepreneurial than many traditional NGOs. Others are small, existing charities, Polish and non-Polish, that have repositioned themselves to serve refugees rather than local residents. Still others are informal networks that have emerged out of no-

where with no organizational leadership—spontaneous, ad hoc groups that coordinate by instant messaging to arrange evacuations and deliver supplies into Ukraine.

Bystanders from around the world—people who could have sympathized from afar and gone on with their lives—have instead raced to help the victims of Russian aggression in Ukraine. The challenge: it isn't easy to help effectively. Good intentions don't always produce results, and most of the best operations in Poland remain works in progress, constantly improvising and adjusting to serve people better.

“Unlike the big groups, I can't take three weeks to do an assessment of local needs,” Mr. Andres says. “I just show up and feed people.” World Central Kitchen is ubiquitous in the region—usually a tent with a half dozen volunteers ladling soup or serving coffee. In just six weeks, according to Mr. Andres, the group has found ways to serve 300,000 hot meals a day at hundreds of locations on the border and inside Ukraine.

The Jewish Community Center in Krakow, where I've been volunteering, interviewing refugees to identify their needs, was once devoted to rebuilding Jewish life destroyed by the Holocaust. But

dren—also Polish language classes, temporary housing and a “distribution center” where people pick up food and clothing donated by well-wishers around the world.

The center's executive director Jonathan Ornstein says he's had scores of offers from strangers eager to volunteer—many more than he can accommodate, even serving over a thousand refugees a day. “I've been stunned,” he reflected. “I didn't expect this outpouring of care and love.” His biggest needs are for volunteers who speak Russian or Ukrainian, have some experience providing emergency services or can help tell the story of what's happening in the border region.

But help comes in unexpected forms, and what's important, he says, is responding creatively. One day, it's a man from England with a van full of clothes and toys who shows up at the front gate and starts unloading boxes. The next week it's an offer from someone local to use an uninhabited palace on the outskirts of Krakow. What the JCC provides are connections—for example, hatching a plan to house a group of orphans in the palace and enlisting a volunteer with friends in high places to smooth the children's passage out of Ukraine.

The ad hoc Polish volunteer group Letjaha—it means “flying squirrel” in Ukrainian—is even more agile. Members came together spontaneously in Krakow in the first days of the war and organized a convoy to pick up refugees at the border. Friends recruited friends. Someone who owned a restaurant found people to cook soup. Someone else canvassed the network and produced a list of empty apartments. By 8 p.m. on the third day of the war, 27 cars were on the road heading for the border crossing at Hrebennie.

The first night was chaotic. “We didn't know what we didn't know,” explains Karolina Fedyk, a postdoctoral psychology student who helped jump-start the network. By the time the volunteers

arrived at an improvised shelter in Hrebennie, many of the women and children were too tired or frightened to travel further, and half the cars returned empty. But the group learned and adjusted. It now mobilizes weekly convoys, delivers medical supplies in Ukraine, has evacuated some 600 refugees and is providing housing in Krakow—all organized by instant messaging and with no formal leadership.

Letjaha isn't unique. I've encountered more than a half dozen similar ad hoc networks: spontaneous, informal, built on trust—sometimes more than a hundred

members who know each other or know of each other—and enabled by the new technology of instant messaging. Most of them operate 24/7. Some have never met in person. Mr. Andres calls them “random people out of nowhere” and says they are the “unsung heroes” of the relief effort.

The question many of these groups face now: do they need more formal structure or professional staff—a financial entity to process donations or leadership to ensure continuity?

Justin Riley, 37, an event organizer originally from Lawrence, Kansas, has been helping to manage a giant refugee center in an abandoned supermarket outside Przemysl. Now serving 2,000 to 3,000 transients a night, it too was originally organized by volunteers. People showed up spontaneously and took on whatever tasks they felt they could handle, from setting up cots and cleaning floors to supervising crews and managing the facility.

After more than a month of freestyle staffing and coordination, the municipality is taking over, and volunteers like Mr. Riley have mixed feelings. “The rules change every day here,” he explains, “depending on which volunteer manager is making decisions, and that can be inefficient. But will the city be as responsive as our decentralized collective?”

What difference will this volunteer work make? You touch only a few people at a time. Some kinds of aid are clearly more needed than others. “It isn't always easy to know how to help,” says Mr. Ornstein. “But every little bit we put into the pot of good makes some difference. You never know what will come out of it.”

Ms. Jacoby is the president of Opportunity America, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit group working to promote economic mobility.



Justin Riley is helping manage a giant refugee center, Przemysl, Poland, Mar. 30.

when the war broke out, the center put those activities on hold and arranged a raft of services for Ukrainians, Jewish and non-Jewish. There is child care for transient families—most of the refugees are women and chil-

REVIEW

Our Tech Superpowers Are No Match for 'Flow'

By ANDY CROUCH

Effortless power is a defining feature of what we began, roughly 150 years ago, to call “modern” life. In countless domains, technology has equipped human beings to vastly increase the sensation of strength while vastly reducing the sensation of effort. A world-class weightlifter is physically powerful, but anyone can see that performing an Olympic deadlift requires tremendous physical, mental and even emotional strain, prepared for by years of training. Someone operating a forklift, on the other hand, can lift far more weight than any athlete with almost no exertion at all.

The sensation of extraordinary capacities without effort has a name, long applied to comic book heroes but now available to all of us: superpowers.

Social media, for example, has given almost everyone a taste of the kind of recognition and affirmation that used to be available only to a handful of movie stars and television personalities. From Facebook to Instagram to the latest app on a 15-year-old's home screen, a series of platforms have granted us low-friction relationships, along with highly visible cues of our status and standing with others. They have given us recognition and influence at a distance: social superpowers.

It's increasingly clear, however, that superpowers come at a cost. Every exercise of superpowers involves a trade: You have to leave part of yourself behind.

Picture yourself on a commercial aircraft, flying at such high speeds that for all practical purposes you might be experiencing the teleportation of science fiction—for what does it really matter if it takes minutes or hours to traverse a continent or an ocean? It's a superpower.

But to have this experience, you must be willing to put essential parts of yourself on hold. Your body is designed for movement, but for the duration of the flight you will be expected to be unnaturally still (not to mention, at least in economy class, effectively confined to a tiny space). Your senses are dulled too. If you were to make the same journey of hundreds or thousands of miles by horse, bicycle or sailboat—all of them non-superpower modes of transport—those senses would be alive like few other times in your life, calling forth emotional, intellectual and even spiritual responses at the sight of mountains, the sharp snap of cold air, the bite of the wind, the brilliance of the stars.

Instead, on this journey your senses recede. Among the first to go at high altitude is taste, which is why the flavors of airline food and drink are made deliberately simple. Your mind, too, feels like it is slowly turning to mush, even before you distract yourself by turning on the romantic comedy offered by the in-flight entertainment system. It's a movie you would never watch in any other circumstance, but somehow now it is strangely appealing.



From jet planes to social media, modern technology gives us the alluring but empty sensation of power without effort.

To be sure, the superpower zone doesn't always feel as passive as air travel has become. Indeed, it can be exhilarating, as when I floor the accelerator in my car or, for that matter, open up my notifications and swipe them away, one after another, with the flick of a finger. In these moments, the superpower zone resembles the times of peak performance—acting decisively and creatively, with focus and energy—that the psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi popularized years ago as “flow.”

The superpower zone, at its most beguiling, comes close to flow, which is why so much consumer spending is devoted to its pursuit. We buy a drone so we can vicariously fly; we buy headphones so we can be immersed in sound. We open up a news feed in our browser and find ourselves drawn in to novelty, amusement or outrage served up at whatever pace our appetite desires.

But the exhilaration of the superpower zone is quite different from flow—most clearly in the way it begins and the way it ends. The superpower zone begins with a sensation of rushing power, excitement and anticipation. Often we feel a sense of accomplishment even before anything has really happened—a surge of pleasure, for example, as the familiar title sequence of our current Netflix series begins to play.

Flow—which I experience most often on 20-mile bicycle rides

through the Pennsylvania countryside, and just often enough when I sit down for writing and other creative tasks—begins very differently. Not infrequently, it begins with resistance: the fear of difficulty, effort and uncertain results. Only after I have overcome my initial reluctance and procrastination does my mood begin, subtly and almost imperceptibly, to shift.

And while the ending of flow—the conclusion of a bike ride or a writing session or a live performance—generally brings a sense of calm and gratitude, exiting the superpower zone is quite different. For one thing, we rarely do so willingly. Just watch a 10-year-old

called away from his videogame to the family meal. He has been immersed in a world of superpowers, of lightning-fast reflexes and capacity for action. For a time he has had the abilities of an NFL quarterback or a Navy SEAL in combat; now it's time to be a 10-year-old again. No wonder he dithers and delays, up to the point of defiant fury. (There is, after all, no dinner hour in the superpower zone.)

And yet, for all the ways we cling to the superpower zone as we are dragged off by a parent, a spouse or other responsibilities, when we look back, our memories of our time spent there are strangely inert. If we can remember the experience at all, it seems that we were in some kind of alternate universe that cannot touch or inform our own—which in fact

is precisely true. We have none of the rich, grateful memories that we do of our moments of real flow. We can recall, perhaps, that we were feeling pleasure and potency, but the pleasure and potency themselves are absent. All that is left is a hollow sense of loss.

There's another catch: Any superpower delivers its initial rush of excitement only a few times. In its early decades, air travel with all its passive luxury was an exhilarating experience, but it has dwindled into tedium. Perhaps you dream of becoming a regular traveler by private jet, but should that happen to you, the same exact pattern will play out. The first few trips will be thrilling, and you will hardly be able to resist taking out your smartphone to document the moment. Over time, though, travel by private jet subsides just as completely as commercial air travel to a distant, dull roar.

Flow, on the other hand, does not seem to subside in the same way. I experience just as much serenity and joy on my bike today—maybe more—as I did on my first long rides as a teenager nearly 40 years ago. Though it cannot be coerced or captured, flow is mysteriously, graciously renewed over the course of our lives.

The secret to being human in a technological age may come down to this: Every time we are tempted to acquire superpowers, we should choose the fullness of heart, soul, mind and strength instead.

This essay is adapted from Mr. Crouch's new book, "The Life We're Looking For: Reclaiming Relationship in a Technological World," which will be published on April 19 by Random House.

Every exercise of superpowers involves a trade: You have to leave part of yourself behind.

HISTORICALLY SPEAKING

AMANDA FOREMAN

The Game of Queens and Grandmasters



FIFTY YEARS AGO, the American chess grandmaster Bobby Fischer played the reigning world champion Boris

Spassky at the “Match of the Century” in Reykjavik, Iceland. The Cold War was at its height, and the Soviets had held the title since 1948. More was riding on the competition than just the prize money.

The press portrayed the Fischer-Spassky match as a duel between the East and the West. But for the West to win, Fischer had to play, and the temperamental chess genius wouldn't agree to the terms. He boycotted the opening ceremony on July 1, 1972, prompting then-National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger to call Fischer and tell him that it was his patriotic duty to go out there and play. Fischer relented—and won, using the Queen's Gambit in game 9 (a move made famous by the Netflix series about a fictional woman chess player).

The Fischer-Spassky match reignited global enthusiasm for a 1,500-year-old game. From its probable origins in India around the 6th century, the basic idea of chess spread rapidly across Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Religious authorities initially condemned the game; even so, the ability to play became an indispensable part of courtly culture.

Chess was a slow-moving game until the 1470s, when new rules were introduced that made it faster and more aggressive. The most important changes were greater mobility for the bishops and the transformation of the queen into the most powerful piece on the board. The instiga-



THOMAS RUGHS

tor remains unknown, although the tradition seems to have started in Spain, inspired, perhaps, by Queen Isabella who ruled jointly with King Ferdinand.

The game captivated some of the greatest minds of the Renaissance. Around 1500, the Italian mathematician Luca Pacioli, known as the Father of Accounting, analyzed more than 100 plays and strategies in “*De ludo schaccorum*” (On the Game of Chess). The hand of Leonardo da Vinci has been detected in some of the illustrations in the only known copy of the book.

Although called the “game of kings,” chess was equally popular with generals. But, as a frustrated Napoleon discovered, triumph on the battlefield was no guarantee of success on the board. Nevertheless, during his exile on St. Helena, Napoleon played so often that one of the more enterprising escape attempts by his supporters involved hidden plans inside an ivory chess set.

London's Great Exhibition of 1851 inspired the British chess master Howard Staunton, who gave his name to the first standardized chess pieces, to organize the first international chess tournament. Travel delays meant that none of the great Russian players were able to participate, despite the country's enthusiasm for the game. In a letter to his wife, Russia's greatest poet Alexander Pushkin declared, “[Chess] is a must for any well-organized family.” It was one of the few bourgeois pastimes to survive the Revolution unscathed.

The Russians regained the world title after the 1972 Fischer-Spassky match. However, in the 1990s they faced a new challenger that wasn't a country but a computer. Grandmaster Garry Kasparov easily defeated IBM's Deep Blue in 1996, only to suffer a shock defeat in 1997. Mr. Kasparov even questioned whether the opposition had played fair. Six years later, he agreed to a showdown at The FIDE Man Versus Machine World Chess Championship, against the new and improved Deep Junior. The 2003 match was a draw, leaving chess the winner.

EXHIBIT

TOP OF THE CITY

THE CROWN OF NEW YORK'S Chrysler building (left) soars in the foreground while, far below, a shaft of light picks out a single, glowing yellow taxi. “My hope is that you can feel my love for this city through my images,” writes photographer Paul Seibert in the introduction to his new book “New York From the Air” (Rizzoli). His photos, taken from helicopters and perches on buildings, can reveal surprises. Brooklyn's Grand Army Plaza, on the ground a noisy maze of crosswalks and off-ramps, from the air assumes a serene oval,

snow-covered beauty. Seen from above, the foreshortened Statue of Liberty has a deep seam running down the middle of her head.

At different seasons, vivid autumn colors seem painted on Central Park's trees, thunderclouds loom apocalyptically over the city's bay and One World Trade Center takes a lightning

strike. New York sends light back into the skies as well: A picture of the Tribute in Light, an annual 9/11 memorial, shows twin columns of light merging, then blazing at the top like a candle.

—Peter Saenger



PAUL SEIBERT

REVIEW

Lady Antonia Fraser's best-selling biographies of Mary Queen of Scots and Marie Antoinette probed the unique travails of female monarchs in eras dominated by men. Her 1984 book "The Weaker Vessel," about the grim lives of women in 17th-century England, has been hailed by critics as a pioneering feminist work.

Yet despite her familiarity with historical sexism, Ms. Fraser was shocked when she learned about Caroline Norton, a well-born Englishwoman and prolific writer, who in 1836 was publicly accused by her husband George of having an affair with the prime minister, Lord Melbourne. George punished Caroline by stealing away their three young children and keeping the proceeds from her writing for himself. "The fact that she was found innocent of adultery, yet George Norton could throw her out of the house, legally take away their three children and live off the copyright of her books, that absolutely stunned me," Ms. Fraser, 89, says over video from her home in London, while her two cats sashay around the room. "I was surprised by the appalling state of women's legal rights. It seemed there'd been no progress since the 17th century."

In "The Case of the Married Woman," published in the U.S. next month, Ms. Fraser writes that Caroline Norton was witty, beautiful and charismatic, the author of over a dozen well-received novels, plays and volumes of poetry. Yet the writings she is best known for today are her pamphlets arguing for the rights of married women. "A woman is made a helpless wretch by these laws of men," Norton once lamented. Her advocacy helped lead to the passage of the Custody of Infants Act of 1839, arguably the first feminist legislation in English history, which made it possible for mothers to petition the courts for custody of their children. She was also instrumental in the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857, which expanded access to divorce and gave women legal protection from exploitation by their husbands.

"The more I knew about her, the more I admired her," Ms. Fraser says. When it came time to write about the tragic and needless death of Norton's youngest son while he was in the negligent care of his father, she admits "there was a tear in my eye, because I identified so much with her at that point." This sense of "tremendous kinship" came largely from the fact that Norton was both a writer and a mother—"those two strong calls, which I experienced, too," Ms. Fraser says.

Ms. Fraser had just given birth to

the last of her six children with her first husband, the Conservative MP Sir Hugh Fraser, when she began writing her first work of serious historical biography, "Mary Queen of Scots." Published in 1969 when she was 36, the book was a bestseller in 11 languages, and Ms. Fraser says it changed her life overnight. Her latest is her 30th book, including 10 novels, two memoirs and two books for children. She credits the daunting output to her discipline during her "sacred" working hours between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. "According to my children, there was a notice on the door saying only come in if you've broken a leg. I deny it," she says with a mischievous smile. She now has 20 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren: "There's something so exciting about babies, though they

do grow into teenagers."

Growing up in Oxford in the 1930s and '40s, Ms. Fraser was a precocious child and voracious reader. She vividly recalls a children's history of England called "Our Island Story" that opened her eyes to the wonders of the past. "It was like suddenly discovering this huge pageant behind me, and I could go wander about in it," she says. The thrill of learning about things that actually happened, often near her home, was far more intoxicating than anything she found in novels. "More or less instantly, I was seized with the desire to write the beautiful big histories myself," she records in her 2015 memoir, "My History."

Despite her aristocratic roots—her father, Frank Pakenham, served as a Labour minister in the House of

Lords and later inherited the title of Lord Longford—Ms. Fraser says that the family was not wealthy. As a second-born son, her father inherited little from his parents. She adds that her well-born first husband was "entirely dependent" on his salary as a politician. Ms. Fraser has always been well-connected (Hugh Gaitskill, J.M. Keynes and Isaiah Berlin were regular guests in her childhood home), but she says that she has earned her own living since she was 21, first by working for a publisher, then from journalism and books.

Her main privilege, she says, was to have come from a family of educated women. Her mother's mother was a doctor, and her mother Elizabeth Longford published several acclaimed historical biographies. The oldest of eight children, including a

brother close in age—"we were tremendous rivals, he's now probably my closest friend"—Ms. Fraser says she always felt that "girls were equal to boys, but actually better."

Given her parents' leftward leanings, Ms. Fraser's choice to marry a Conservative politician when she was 22 was "a bit of a shock," she admits. But she says it was helpful that Hugh Fraser, who died in 1984, was Catholic. Ms. Fraser's parents had converted to Ca-

'It was like suddenly discovering this huge pageant behind me, and I could go wander about in it.'

tholicism, and she followed suit in her teens, in part because of "its connection to history and ritual, the 'bells and smells,' as people used to say."

Religion was no barrier, however, when she met and fell in love with Harold Pinter, the Nobel Prize-winning playwright, in 1975. The British tabloids made much of their different backgrounds—the working-class Jewish boy and the Catholic aristocrat—but in her 2010 memoir about their lives together, "Must You Go?," Ms. Fraser says that when they met both were successful writers who belonged to the same "Bohemian class." Pinter was not religious, though Ms. Fraser says that he was "very interested in matters of the spirit. I mean his favorite poets, T.S. Eliot, Yeats, these are people who were not interested in secularism."

She married Pinter in 1980, three years after divorcing Fraser, and they lived together in London until his death in 2008. She says she still misses coming down from her study to discuss her work with him over lunch. "He was such a good critic. He didn't know history, but he adored the English language," she says. "I still, thank goodness, dream about him, though it's awful when I wake up."

Age has hardly slowed Ms. Fraser, who is already researching her next book: a biography of Lady Caroline Lamb, a 19th-century English novelist and mistress of Lord Byron. She says she has learned to bat away questions about retirement, quietly confident in the sharpness of her memory and the strength of her writing, which she suspects has grown only "more fluent" with time. She adds that dwelling in history is also a balm in uncertain times. "In times of stress, it's good to think about the troubles of the past, and how they did pass," she says. "I think it's consoling."



WEEKEND CONFIDENTIAL | EMILY BOBROW

Antonia Fraser

At 89, a renowned biographer is still telling the stories of women who made history.



AN OFFICE DOUGHNUT

How to Get Workers Back to The Office: Doughnuts

Let's promote the joy of glazed carbohydrates in the break room.

OH YEAH, IT'S ME. A delicious office doughnut.

How's it going? Haven't seen you around. It's been awhile.

You're thinking about coming into the office, full time. You've been back, here and there, but that place is still pretty much a ghost town.

The boss keeps sending emails about return-to-work—what the company needs, what the company wants, what the company is hoping for from its employees.

They want everyone back in the building. They're offering all kinds of enticements. They say you can stay at home a couple of days a week. They're trying to be flexible with vacations and per-

sonal leave, and there's even a "quality of life" package that says you can go surfing once a year, for any reason.

It's a pretty good offer. The boss isn't being bossy about it. They're just a little lonely in the office. They miss you.

The problem is, you've gotten used to working at home.

You're accustomed to remote meetings, Zoom calls in your Yoda pajamas and the flexibility of breakfast and lunch in your home kitchen—which I am just going to guess isn't loaded with scrumptious, sugary, 300-calorie office doughnuts.

You've actually been eating better. The other day, you made yourself a smoothie with almond butter, coconut milk, protein and strawberries.

Yuck. It's a disgrace.

On behalf of all doughnuts, let me say: I think management has it all wrong. They're focusing on all the wrong things.

Teamwork. Wellness. All this



mumbo-jumbo about "reimagining the modern workplace."

Some of them are even offering modest raises to get your buns back in a swiveling chair.

It's not effective.

Work should be making an offer you cannot refuse. They need to promote the one experience you cannot replicate at home. Office doughnuts.

Of course you can eat doughnuts at home. *Of course* you could hop in the car and buy a dozen for yourself right now.

But we both know it's not the same thing as an office doughnut. An office doughnut is both a snack and a surprise. It is there

when you walk into the break room in the morning, starting out from a box—*Hey!!!!*—with a bunch of its friends.

Maybe it's glazed. Maybe it's powdered. Maybe it has tiny rainbow sprinkles and

tastes like a Halloween pumpkin. The point is that it's delicious. And it's free.

You say to yourself: *I really shouldn't.* But you do.

You say: *I'm just going to cut off a tiny bit.* But then you wolf down the whole thing.

And it's the best minute of your workday. (Followed by the worst minute of your workday: *Why did I eat that doughnut? I'm never eating an office doughnut again.*)

Once in a while, somebody in the office—a triathlete, usually—tries to put a halt to the doughnuts. Management launches a campaign to promote healthy

eating. They install a juicer that nobody uses after the third day.

Banning doughnuts from the office is like banning complaining. It's against the grain of everything work is supposed to be.

A true office worker is a bit of a doughnut hunter. You know when the doughnuts tend to arrive, who brings them and from where. You know just the right time to show up to have a choice. You know exactly when they go stale (never). The office doughnut is prey.

But even that last office doughnut is delicious. The sad doughnut, the one with grape filling that nobody wanted or that maybe got sneezed on.

You'll eat that doughnut, too. Because you're a team player.

So let's get real about the return to the office. Work from home is mostly delightful. You avoid the commute, traffic and all those in-person meetings which never made any sense.

It's made you happy. But not as happy as an office doughnut.

See you Monday morning. I'll bring some pals.

—As told to Jason Gay



O Alabama!
The Union Navy's hunt
for the South's dread
sloop-of-war C12

BOOKS

The Great Passion
J.S. Bach and
the sacred sound
of Easter C11



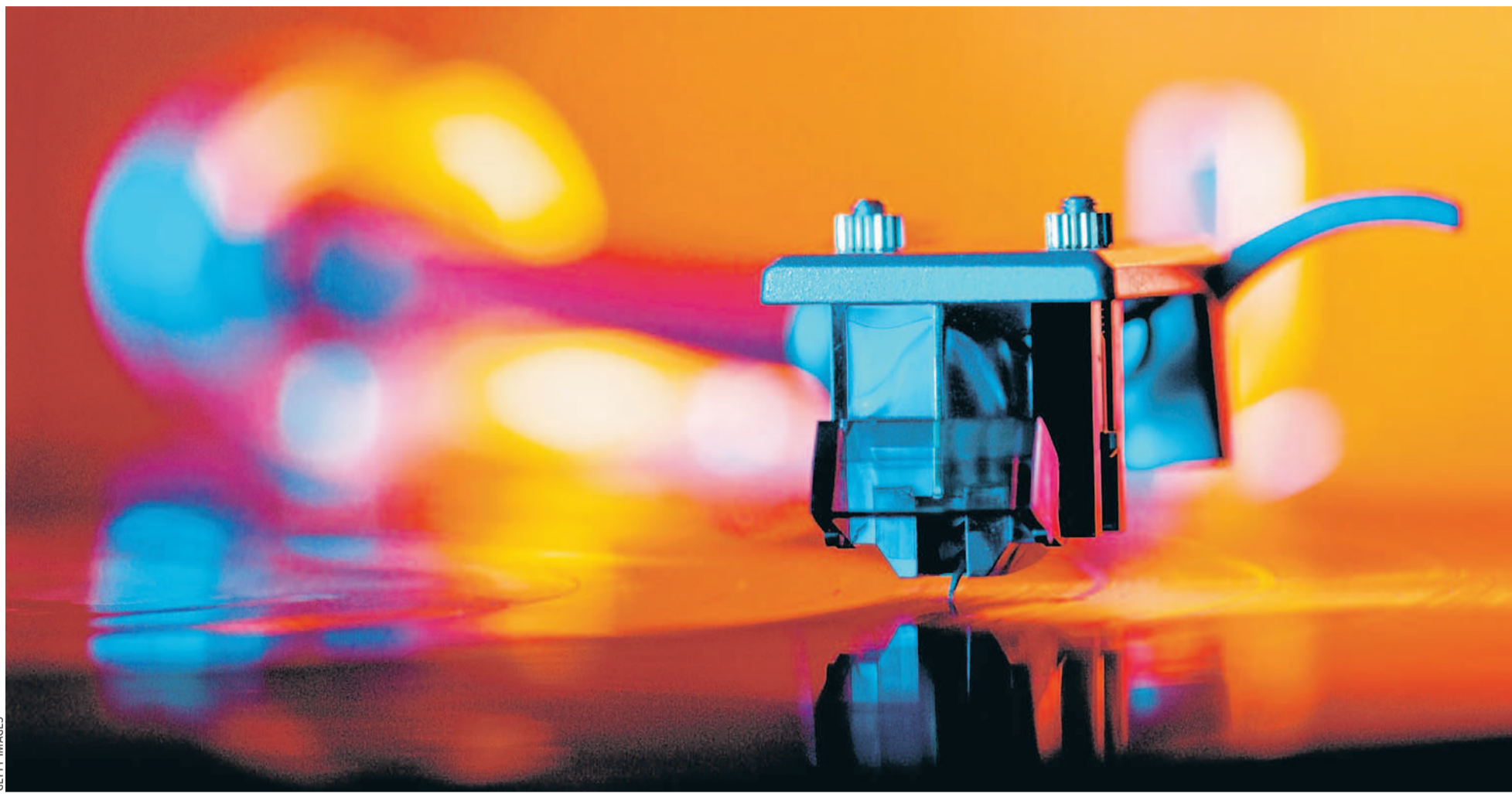
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(He Can't Get No) Satisfaction

An audiophile embarks on an impossible quest to transform his living room into La Scala



The Perfect Sound

By Garrett Hongo
Pantheon, 526 pages, \$30

By DANIEL J. LEVITIN

NOBEL PRIZE-winning economist Herb Simon coined the term “satisficing” to address the underlying tension between the “satisfying” and the “sufficient,” the search for perfection and the settling for what is merely good. “Satisficing” describes a complex interaction between consumer behavior, personal aspiration and rational decision-making. Do I need to find the very best dry-cleaner in town, or can I stop my search with the shop that’s good enough?

I am an admitted, nerdy music buff. I’ve spent much of my life seeking out just the right guitar and the right mix of stereo gear to create high-fidelity sound. I find joy in the exploration, in the *happiness of pursuit*. But eventually I get lazy. I just want to play the guitar and not worry about whether it’s the best one, or whether it has the best strings, etc. When I curl up on the sofa in my living room with a glass of Château Margaux, I want to listen to Miles Davis or Rodney Crowell and

relax into the listening rather than try to identify flaws in the delivery system. I’m occasionally brought back to tinkering. When the lockdown began, I had an old turntable that I replaced with not one, but two new turntables and four different stereo cartridges so that I could optimize my vinyl listening. I’ve settled into a happy, satisficing plateau where it is good enough.

Or is it?
Enter Garrett Hongo, a professor of poetry at the University of Oregon, who has spent the last few decades searching for the perfect hi-fi system. His book “The Perfect Sound: A Memoir in Stereo” is itself a stereo recording, with autobiography in one channel and his search for the best sound in the other—a search that involves learning about different kinds of tubes, impedance, transformers and circuit design. It’s about Hawaii and exploring his family tree. Mr. Hongo’s late father, an electronics technician at Learjet, was partly deaf but loved music and had an extensive record collection. As the author, now 70, tries to reconnect to memories of the man and connect the pieces of his own childhood, he is also connecting and reconnecting dozens of audio cables in different configurations. And, like the recent movies “Licorice Pizza” and “Once

Upon a Time in Hollywood,” his memoir is a paean to old Los Angeles—Felix Chevrolet, Hawthorne Boulevard, the mostly Japanese-American suburb of Gardena, the aerospace industry. Along the way Mr. Hongo provides one of the most colorful accounts of ’60s-era adolescent sexual fumbling I’ve ever read. I won’t spoil the ending, but his is an amazing story—deliciously wonky, exquisitely paced, and with a surprise artfully revealed.

Some people like music as background, as sonic wallpaper; some

Can any one sound system render all musical styles, from Cream to Coltrane to Callas, with equal aplomb?

listen with their eyes closed and allow it to transport them. Music comforts, inspires, and can connect to feelings that we can’t otherwise describe or display. “I come from an affectless, un-sentimental people,” Mr. Hongo writes, “their emotions battered by three generations of brutal life on the plantations and conditioned to its harsh disappointments . . . When I screamed

for joy as a child, I was hushed if not struck. When I wept for the beauty I saw in the landscapes and seascapes that surrounded us, I was mocked by cousins and uncles. . . . But my father’s music”—big-band standards and Hawaiian LPs blaring from a bookshelf Mini-Flex speaker—“overwhelmed this impoverished inheritance like a wave enfolding its barrier reef . . . It overcame what was taboo.”

Such is the childhood of a poet in the making, a late bloomer by his own admission. Beginning with lessons on how to read Keats with his mentor Robert Hayden at Michigan, he grows, in fits and in starts. The poetic symmetry is that writing great poetry requires the kind of dogged, compulsive exploration and experimentation that selecting tubes and audio components does, a blind, perhaps delusional faith that all this effort will amount to something tangible that will be worth it. For the poet and the hi-fi enthusiast to get anywhere, they must enjoy not only the outcome but the ride.

And the soundtrack for that ride is joyously far-reaching. Mr. Hongo is just as passionate about Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys as he is about Ben Webster, Renée Fleming, the Kingston Trio, Memphis Minnie, King Curtis, Cream, slack-key guitar, doo-wop, R&B

and opera. Ms. Fleming is clearly his favorite, and if there is a single voice that has driven his quest, it is hers, as he seeks to reveal its most sublime and subtle nuances.

A neophyte might just buy the very best individual components and hook them up together. But, as Mr. Hongo discovered, that seldom works because each piece needs to interact harmoniously with the others—the configuration matters. And what sounds good for jazz may not sound good for opera.

“Eager to hear arias the way I’d heard Ellington,” he writes, “I tried one CD after another—Renée Fleming aria compilations, then highlights from *La Traviata* and *La Bohème*. The music would sail along for a while . . . then a Fleming or a Bergonzi would crank up their voice, declaiming in dramatic Italian some kind of hurt, wrong, or frustrated love.” He listened with frustration to “the great voices thinning and crackling as they rose up the scale” and then collapse into “a shuddering scratchiness.” The offending component? His new CL-15 CD player by California Audio Labs.

Changing everything—new Bowers & Wilkins tower speakers, a Cary SLI-80 integrated amp and a Musical Fidelity CD player—he gets closer. *Please turn to page C8*

The Courts Of the Conquerors

Persians
By Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones
Basic, 431 pages, \$35

By MAXWELL CARTER

ON DEC. 28, 1934, Sir Hughe Montgomery Knatchbull-Hugessen, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Persia—good luck parodying that—wrote to George Rendel, the

The Persians changed warfare with a bold tactic: shooting arrows from horseback while riding at speed.

Head of the Eastern Department of Britain’s Foreign Office, describing “an absurd note” from the local government, “asking us to speak of ‘Iran’ and ‘Iranian’ instead of ‘Persia’ and ‘Persians.’”: “I understand the person originally responsible for this is Herodotus, who, not being able to foresee the sensitivities of the modern Persian, was insufficiently polite in his references to this country.”

“Persia” and Knatchbull-Hugessen are no more—the latter eventually undone by the disloyalty and Nazi predilections of his Albanian valet, who passed clandestine photographs of his papers on to the German ambassador in Ankara. But the Herodotean influence on how the region’s ancient history is taught and perceived in the West remain. Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones’s “Persians: The Age of the Great Kings” is the sort of book one would prescribe for Knatchbull-Hugessen, or perhaps bludgeon him with, today.

A professor at Cardiff University, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones traces the Achaemenid Dynasty (550-330 B.C.) from its nomadic antecedents in Central Asia—Aryans who migrated south to Iran (and India) in three distinct phases from around 1300 B.C.—to the arrival of Alexander the Great. In his effort to give “ear to a genuine ancient Persian voice,” Mr. Llewellyn-Jones synthesizes what can be gleaned from artifacts, inscriptions and fragmentary accounts.

The proto-Iranians were not, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones relates, “eco-friendly pastoral pacifists.” Settling in Parsa (from the old Indo-Iranian word for “rib,” whence Persia derives), they “revolutionised cavalry warfare” with a sophisticated archery technique—shooting arrows on horseback with small composite bows at speed—and fought continuously with fellow tribes in the Iranian plateau. Their seminal pre-imperial conflict was defensive in nature. In the 550s B.C., the ambitious Median king Astyages invaded Persia, which united its chiefs against him under his grandson, Prince Cyrus II of Anshan—in time, Cyrus the Great.



SHARP Frieze of archers, ca. 510 B.C., in the palace of Darius I, in Susa, Iran.

The lack of contemporary sources is particularly acute with Cyrus. Mr. Llewellyn-Jones gamely imagines his childhood and how he developed an obligatory sense of destiny, as well as the young prince’s physical appearance: “His dark eyes were shaded beneath thick, unforgiving eyebrows. The black *khol*, a watery mascara which he liberally smeared above and below his eyelashes, added to the lus-

tre of his gaze. He was lean and good-looking in that way that Persian men are uniquely handsome.” Whatever the attractions of Persian men, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones’s sketch of Cyrus is, I suspect, closer to an Iranian soap opera star than the likely homelier reality. Regarding the ruler’s presumed dress of floor-length coat, baggy trousers and cap, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones cites the remarkable 2008 discovery

of Salt-Man 4, an auto-mummified corpse dating to ca. 500 B.C., in the Chehrabad mine in northern Iran.

Cyrus married into the Achaemenid clan and launched its dynasty at the Battle of Pasargadae, which resulted in Astyages’s capture. Cyrus conciliated his former enemies and, it seems, spared Astyages—if not his son-in-law and grandchildren, who, as potential rivals of the future, were swiftly eliminated. He soon moved on Astyages’s proverbially wealthy brother-in-law, Croesus of Lydia. In Herodotus’s telling, Croesus consulted the Oracle of Delphi about his prospects of success. The superbly equivocal response: “If Croesus goes to war, he will destroy a great empire.” Of course, it would be his own.

To the conquests of Media and Lydia, Cyrus added Babylon, placing the Achaemenids on the doorstep of Egypt. Imperial propaganda was consequently in order. Mr. Llewellyn-Jones’s exegesis of the Cyrus Cylinder—visitors to the British Museum may inspect this uninviting slab; it has always looked to me like an enormous peanut shell—is pithy and insightful. The author marvels at its unabashed narrative of Babylonian tyranny, Persian divine purpose and liberation, and he dismisses the anachronistic notion that what he calls “the greatest PR document from antiquity” might alternatively signify the “first declaration of human rights”: “In fact, this progressive idea was entirely unknown in antiquity and was completely alien to Cyrus’ world. . . . His empire was founded on bloodshed, as all empires invariably are.”

Please turn to page C9

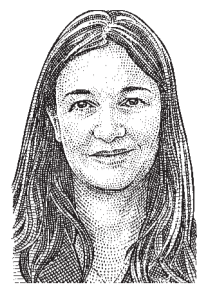
BOOKS

‘Who would choose uneasy dreams to don a crown when all the kingly sway can be enjoyed without?’ —SOPHOCLES

FIVE BEST ON AN AGE OF REMARKABLE MONARCHS

Catherine Ostler

The author, most recently, of ‘The Duchess Countess: The Woman Who Scandalized 18th-Century London’



Selected Letters of Horace Walpole

Edited by Stephen Clarke (2017)

From his writing, Virginia Woolf called Horace Walpole “the best company in the world—the most amusing, the most intriguing—the strangest mixture of ape and Cupid that ever was.” Walpole, eventually the Fourth Earl of Orford, was the son of Britain’s first de facto prime minister, Robert Walpole, and became a man of letters, art historian, chief gossip of the 18th century as well as a Whig member of parliament. His letters take us into the world of George II and III, a role for which their writer, with his boundless access and interest, was ideally suited. They are witty, educated, sly and camp, and always fascinating on the spirit of the age. Walpole’s most frequent correspondent was Horace Mann, the British plenipotentiary in Florence, Italy. Best friends from childhood, the two wrote almost daily despite not meeting again during the final 45 years of their friendship. In a single letter, Walpole might wander from war to weddings to art and anecdote and aphorism. To Mann he wrote of “our supreme governors, the mob”; to his cousin Henry Conway, when Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz had arrived in London to marry George III: “You don’t presume to suppose, I hope, that we are thinking of you, and wars, and misfortunes, and distresses, in these festival times.”

Peter the Great: His Life and World

By Robert K. Massie (1980)

Robert Massie’s biography is a masterpiece of storytelling: a history book of grand pan-European sweep. Massie succeeds in illuminating Peter the Great’s character in ways that reflect on the nature of Russia itself. The book starts with Peter’s upbringing in 17th-century Moscow. “For twenty years, Peter had been playing with soldiers; first toys, then boys, then grown men. His games had grown from drills involving a few hundred idle stable boys and falconers to 30,000 men involved in the assault and



FATHER FIGURE Portrait of George III (ca. 1800) by William Beechey.

defense of the river fort of Pressburg.” In the years of actual combat that followed, Peter defeated Sweden in 1709 at the Battle of Poltava. The Swedish empire shrank, and Russian supremacy began. Massie’s biography is distinguished by lengthy and rewarding asides, among them one involving a sultan determined to find the fattest woman in his empire—on the grounds that the bigger a woman was, the more enjoyable she would be. The enormous woman his agents found was indeed so fascinating to the sultan

that he made her governor-general of Damascus.

Catherine the Great and Potemkin

By Simon Sebag Montefiore (2000)

Simon Sebag Montefiore’s book brings alive the drama of the extraordinary partnership that outlasted a passionate love affair. This was a pairing of equals—Catherine had the charm and political flair; her partner, an irresistible, tactical genius. The book includes many

memorable moments, such as those from Catherine’s horrific marriage to Peter III, whom she succeeded to the throne, and who had a habit of playing with dolls on his bed. In Mr. Montefiore’s hands, Potemkin is a mesmerizing, ambitious if also self-intoxicated giant—and a daring one.

The Last King of America

By Andrew Roberts (2021)

Andrew Roberts rehabilitates King George III—who reigned for six decades, in sickness and

in health—from the man who lost America and went mad, to someone altogether more interesting, sensitive and admirable. Mr. Roberts scrupulously assesses George’s reign, his decisions, his mind and his milieu. He was tender and intelligent, the first Hanoverian monarch king to be raised in Britain—the first Hanover, moreover, to be brought up with an ideal of kingship: an ideal prompted by his father, who wanted his son to govern, as Bolingbroke had suggested, “like the common father of the people.” Far from the tyrant perceived by the Americans, George knew that his constitutional role was to support Parliament’s decisions. “It is ironic,” Mr. Roberts writes, “that Whig historians attacked George for trying to subvert the British constitution when in fact it was his unshakable respect for it that helped him lose America.”

Madame de Pompadour

By Nancy Mitford (1953)

Mistress, confidante, adviser to Louis XV and setter of taste, Madame de Pompadour emerges in full color in this revelatory work by Nancy Mitford, who tells Pompadour’s story with such verve as to make the author seem an intimate of the society she describes. Born into the bourgeoisie as Jeanne Antoinette Poisson, Pompadour would become, for two decades, the most powerful woman in France, though in the end her enemies were so numerous she feared to go out in public without a disguise. To Mitford, the queen is a “bore” and Pompadour herself a sort of artistic creation who “excelled at an art which the majority of human beings thoroughly despise because it is unprofitable and ephemeral: the art of living.” As class conflict looms—Versailles seeming as disconnected from the French population as an elite could possibly be—it’s hard to avoid thoughts of the revolution to come. Thanks to Mitford’s unflinching wit, there’s plenty of fun along the way.

The Audio-ophile & His Obsessions

Continued from page C7

Listening to Act II of “La Bohème” he is awestruck: “Flirty and lighthearted, Fleming sings the aria with an amazing vocal flourish at its climax . . . Her voice was more gorgeous than I’d ever heard it before—smooth and creamy through her midrange, thrilling at its top end.” He intuits there is still improvement in the offing and does more research. Though the then-current configuration easily gives him what he sought from jazz and choral music, the dynamics of opera call for more. He hunts down a pair of vintage Tung-Sol 6550 tubes he had read about to replace the Cary stock KT88s, which brings him closer to his ideal.

He continues to experiment. Listening to Handel’s “Semele” through a pair of deHavilland KE50A monoblock amplifiers, it pays off. “Fleming struck a crazy coloratura note, ornamented and vibrant, lyric and sweetly piercing, testing the upper reach of the amps’ extension. The KE50As nailed it—no spike, no glare, no hole in the voice, and no ornaments of melisma and vibrato disappearing and breaking up Fleming’s supple rendering of the aria’s most dramatic moment.”

And Mr. Hongo brings these powers of vivid description to a dozen other styles, genres and repertoires. Listening to the song “White Room” by Cream while auditioning a new system, he writes, “[Ginger] Baker’s kick drum boomed and stomped like a

Clydesdale stuck in its stall, itching to rumble . . . When [Eric] Clapton quivered some chords with his tremolo bar, it felt like he reached out and grasped the interlocking bones of my skull and spine from the inside, shaking me from the marrow out.”

We learn the history of vacuum tubes, a topic you might think is about as interesting as the development of the door stop, but in Mr. Hongo’s telling is gripping. And while lifting the hood on various playback components—pre-amplifiers, amplifiers, turntables, cartridges, speakers—he digs into the history of the recording of those very sounds we seek to play back, including the invention of stereo by Alan Blumlein in 1931. Mono sound comes from one point in space—where the loud-

A memoir in stereo, with autobiography in one channel and the author’s quest for the ‘best’ sound in the other.

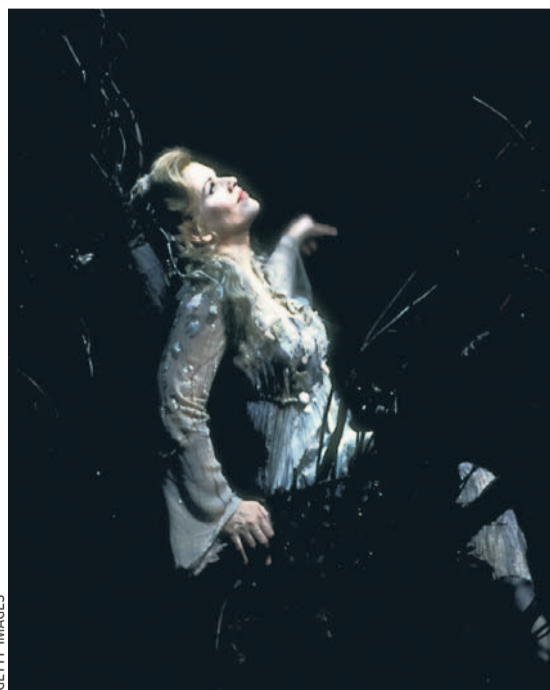
speaker is. Adding a second channel of information and loudspeaker doesn’t cause the sound to reach us from two distinct points but from an entire spatial continuum of left to right, an infinity of points between the speakers and sometimes beyond them. That immersiveness brings us closer to what music sounds like in a well-defined concert hall or nightclub, brings us closer to our evolutionary history of hearing live music with all its spatial complexity.

A peculiarity of the human brain is that when we see things, it feels as though the objects are out there, in the external world, and our perspective is

that the “me” in all this is located somewhere in our heads, behind our eyes. But sound is different—it feels like it is coming from inside our heads, alongside that fictitious “me,” making it more intimate even than vision.

Leveraging this, recording engineers in the 1960s began experimenting with putting microphones in unconventional places, such as inside a guitar, or just a few inches above the strings of the piano. The result brings the listener to an otherworldly and often wonderful place. It’s no longer simply that the piano feels like it’s coming from inside your head, but it also feels like your head is inside the piano, with the sounds enveloping you completely, swirling from left to right. Going further, Roy Halee placed a microphone right next to Hal Blaine’s snare drum for the Simon & Garfunkel recording of “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” pumped the snare-drum sound through a speaker at the bottom of an elevator shaft, and then placed a mic at the top of the shaft to capture the resulting echo, magnificent and eerie.

Recordings can be made with wildly different aesthetics—the dense, powerful sounds of heavy metal in which all the instruments are tightly packed together, or the more open and transparent sound of a solo instrument or jazz trio, in which we can distinguish each component of a drum set (hi-hat, cymbals, snare, kick, toms) and simultaneously track two or three different guitar parts as they retain their individuality. Digital recording and editing can eliminate tape hiss and allow for



DIVA Renée Fleming as Dvořák’s Rusalka.

more of the instrument and less of the technology to grab our attention. As Paul Simon said in describing the production of his 2016 album “Stranger to Stranger,” he was able for the first time in his career to get rid of the “ear-itants” that distracted him.

Can one sound system render every musical style, from Bach to Beyoncé, from Miles Davis to Drake, from Tuvan throat singers to Triumph, with equal aplomb? Can it provide a listening experience that faithfully conveys the emotions the musicians put into it? Probably not, but it can get close. In my own quest, I bought a pair of Tannoy SGM-10 speakers after spending an afternoon sitting on the floor of Richard Carpenter’s listening room, listening to records by the Carpenters and Joni Mitchell. Those were the speakers he bought, Mr. Carpenter said, because those were the speakers in the studio where the records were

made, and he wanted to hear the music as its creators intended. I still have Yamaha NS10s from when I produced records in the 1980s, which are *not* high-fidelity, but so many of my favorite records from that period were mixed on that model. I use Miller & Kreisel S-1s with a 500-watt powered subwoofer to listen to Simon & Garfunkel, the Beatles, Queen and Earl “Fatha” Hines because my friend John D’Arcy designed the frequency response characteristics of those speakers when he worked for M&K, bringing me in now and then to confirm or argue with the choices he made. I use KRK Exposed to record my own music because their frequency range reaches both an octave higher and an octave lower than any other speakers I could find, without compromising clarity.

With all of that, we also have a Bose Wave CD player in the kitchen, and Sonos speakers in the bedrooms and home office. That’s a lot of speakers. I aspire to gain the relative simplicity that Mr. Hongo has achieved with a single system, but, well, I am too lazy to change. Mr. Hongo may have yet to find perfection in his setup—he remains certain, he writes, “by a thirst for a certain quality of sound [that] I remembered hearing at La Scala.” If at some point he stops to satisfy, he will have arrived at a very, very high level.

Mr. Levitin is a neuroscientist, author and musician. His latest book is “Successful Aging” and his new CD is “sex & math.”

BOOKS

'The only thing that makes [exile] tolerable is the discovery of a self you did not know existed, of a true independence.' —AZAR NAFISI

From the Paris Streets to America

Mutinous Women

By Joan DeJean

Basic, 437 pages, \$32

By KATHLEEN DUVAL

ON AN OCTOBER DAY in 1719, more than 100 women filed out of Paris's Salpêtrière prison. Chained to one another and wearing only their shifts, they climbed onto carts that took them out of the city. They knew they had been banished from Paris, but they could not imagine the place they were being sent. Half a world away lay their new home, the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, where France had recently begun to establish a colony.

Gripping from its opening scene of a corpse discovered on a Paris side street, Joan DeJean's "Mutinous Women" tells the stories of these French women, deported as unwanted criminals to what would become, less than a century later, part of the United States. Through astounding research in French and Louisiana archives, including police files from the women's arrests and trials, Ms. DeJean, a French literature professor at the University of Pennsylvania, reconstructs the lives of nearly every one of these largely unknown women.

In June 1719, 16-year-old Marie Baron was arrested for stealing a ribbon. She had arrived in Paris around a decade earlier with her family, seeking food and work. Her village usually grew enough wheat to sell to France's urban population, but a series of disastrously bad harvests and extremely cold winters had brought famine to the country. In 1709, a parish priest noted, "this year there was no wheat at all." Hundreds of thousands of French people died that year and many more did so in the following years. Among the deaths were Marie's parents and siblings. Parisian anger at the rural poor who crowded into their city was high, and many of these unfortunates ended up in prison on charges of theft or prostitution. Marie's first arrest came when she was only 7, swooped up by a French officer on horseback. By the time Marie Baron was arrested for the third time—the ribbon theft—the French judicial system had devised a new way to deal with girls and women like her. Banishment from the city was a traditional punishment, but hungry people had a habit of sneaking back in. This new plan would mean lifetime exile.

Most of the women Ms. DeJean writes about were branded as prostitutes, but she argues that "what happened to these ordinary Frenchwomen could have happened to virtually any woman who found herself in Paris in 1719." Some were Parisians, some were members of the rural poor like Marie Baron, and some were foreign-born, mostly Irishwomen or "Bohémiens," ancestors of Europe's Romani. Most of these women were trying to piece together a living with the kinds of work available to them, including washing dishes and cleaning and mending clothing. Law enforcement officers saw the deportation plan as their chance to clear the streets. Charges against the women included "debauchery" and "caught begging for the fifth time."



GO WEST 'The Conduct of the Girls of Joy in the Salpêtrière, the Passage by the Gates of St. Bernard' (1755) by Etienne Jeaurat. Many of the women France first settled in its American colonies had been arrested for prostitution and jailed in Paris's Salpêtrière prison.

A few women targeted for deportation did avoid it. Marie Baron's friend Anne Crétin was also arrested for the ribbon theft, but she had family in Paris. When they learned that she was on the deportation list, they worked to secure her release. Marie had no one. Along with the others, she was carted to the port of Le Havre and loaded onto a former slave ship, the frigate aptly named *La Mutine*, "the mutinous or seditious woman."

Ms. DeJean uses her knowledge as a scholar of early modern France to great effect. Paris comes alive as a place where women and men lived and died, trying to take care of themselves and their families. Through the eyes of Marie Baron, we see the luxurious, well-stocked ribbon emporium on Paris's Rue Saint-Honoré. We hear the voices of women selling "carnations, carnations, my beautiful carnations" and "baked apples, apples baked in an oven." We witness one woman stripped naked in public and forced to watch an alleged accomplice's execution.

In "Mutinous Women," the poverty and brutality of Paris become a vivid backdrop to surprising contrasts in North America, although, as Ms. DeJean reveals, it would not have seemed that way at first. Shackled together in the ship's hold and then dumped on a desert island off the coast of what's now

Mississippi, many of the women died during the voyage or soon thereafter. In the colony, as the author explains, they "found a land where the French were but a tiny minority, vastly outnumbered by indigenous peoples. They found themselves surrounded by flora, fauna, and landscapes that were strange, forbidding, and at times even nightmarish." Perhaps scarier than the alligators for a Frenchwoman was learning to cook with cornmeal instead of wheat flour.

With no prison to hold them in the colonies, the women slipped away from authorities. They made homes in Mobile, New Orleans and Arkansas Post.

Yet a surprisingly large number of the survivors built lives for themselves in colonial towns. With no prison to hold them, the women slipped away from colonial authorities. They made homes in Mobile, in New Orleans and in Arkansas Post, far up the Mississippi River. They literally built the houses and bore the children who would

become French Louisiana's colonial population. Of the first 10 women married in the city of New Orleans, half were deportees from 1719.

Many of the women sent away from Paris established businesses, married farmers and soldiers and fur traders, and acquired property. Some lived into their 40s and 50s and beyond—much longer lives than they could have had on the streets of Paris. Marie Baron married a farmer, survived being captured and seeing her husband and eldest son killed in the French-Natchez War of 1729-30, and ultimately told her story to Louisiana's first historian (and married him).

By discovering these poor women from the colonial past, "Mutinous Women" conveys a fascinating history and a reminder that all kinds of people helped to build what became the United States. As Ms. DeJean shows, these women, "who had left France in disgrace and had been treated as subhuman upon their arrival in Louisiana," became "pillars of their communities" and played a crucial role in North American history.

Ms. DuVal, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is the author of "Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution."

The Kings Of Ancient Persia

Continued from page C7

None of Cyrus's successors would enjoy the same "press." His son, Cambyses, was accused, among other things, of slaughtering irksome priests and ransacking temples. (Herodotus: "I have no doubt that Cambyses was completely out of his mind.") Darius the Great was "an able soldier and a gifted courtier" who conspired against Cyrus's grandson Bardiya, while maintaining that the ruler he did away with was actually an imposter who had secretly overthrown Bardiya already: essentially, "The Prisoner of Zenda" minus the swordplay. Not unlike Cyrus, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones notes, Darius "championed the dissemination of an elaborate series of alternative facts." Per the 5th-century B.C. court physician Ctesias, Darius's claim to the Persian throne rested on the behavior of his horse—it was obligingly quick to neigh.

Between the reigns of Darius and his son Xerxes, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones pauses to explore what it meant to be Persian, along with the Achaemenids' bureaucratic bent ("Nothing was too trivial to be logged"), coinage and architecture. A chapter on Persian "slavery by another name" recounts the grim lot of foreign laborers, whose breeding was monitored, whose families were divided and whose food was rationed in the name of the royal building program. Orgiastic fantasies of harem life are disabused—if anything, we might learn from the Persian

ethos: "There was no honour in being visible. In Persian antiquity, invisibility brought prestige." And Zoroastrianism is surveyed from its murky beginnings to Nietzsche.

In the received version, the Greco-Persian wars of the fifth century B.C. represented the triumph of "democracy" over despotism. John Stuart Mill celebrated the Greek victory at Marathon (490 B.C.) as "more important than the battle of Hastings" for "the true ancestors of the European nations are not those from whose blood they are sprung, but those from whom they derive the richest portion of their inheritance."

To readers of Herodotus and the Hebrew Bible, Xerxes is unhinged and pathetic. "Reading Herodotus," Mr. Llewellyn-Jones observes, "is a delightful experience . . . but as a 'history' of Xerxes' campaign into Greece, he offers us little more than a ragbag of stories of war exploits, strung together by the themes of Greek heroism and moral probity." In fact, Sparta was "the most oppressive freedom-denying slave state of antiquity" and the Battle of Thermopylae—the subject of "300" (2006), surely one of the worst movies ever made—"can only be interpreted as a great Persian victory." Had Xerxes not taken the bait at Salamis, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones conjectures, he "could easily have split and destroyed the Greek alliance." At all events, Xerxes boasted, incredibly, that his goal had been accomplished: "By the favour of Ahuramazda, I overwhelmed that country and put it in its proper place."

After Xerxes came Artaxerxes—who may have killed his father. He reigned for 41 years and died peacefully. His heir, Xerxes II, was murdered by his half-brother Sogdianus, who, in turn, was suffocated at the

behest of his half-brother, Darius II. Seven (or more) of the 12 Achaemenid kings were assassinated, lending credence to Xenophon's bleak reflection that "nowhere are men more obvious prey to harm than when at dinner, or when drinking wine, in the bath, or asleep in bed." Woe betide the king who ate or slept.



MAUSOLEUM Tomb of Cyrus the Great (559-530 B.C.), Pasargadae, Iran.

Violence and intrigue were not limited to male claimants. Cyrus the Younger's mother, Parysatis, would have been at home in the goriest revenge tragedy. Those she held responsible for Cyrus's death at the Battle of Cunaxa (401 B.C.) were tortured on the rack; blinded; forced molten bronze; and flayed alive. One, Mithridates, was buried up to his head in mud and, by painstaking contrivance, had his insides eaten away by maggots and rats over 17 days. For her daughter-in-law, Stateira, Parysatis "purposefully cho[se] a poison that would cause

. . . a leisurely and wretched death."

Mr. Llewellyn-Jones credits the royal consort's fairy-tale villainy to a drive "for the security of the dynasty": "Parysatis' tragedy lay in the fact that the Persian imperial system afforded no official space to women of her ability, as her ancestors had known." And Hitler's

misfortune was the selectivity of Vienna's art schools. Alexander the Great and Darius III ascended to power in 336 B.C. Mr. Llewellyn-Jones charts their collision course with sensitivity to the "very serious source problems"—namely the "lavishly mythologised Greek and Latin adventure stories of the Great Alexander" on the one hand, and the "woeful state of the Persian sources" on the other. As with Parysatis, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones is apt to forgive Darius III's shortcomings, justifying his flight from his family and soldiers on the battlefield at Issus as an

"active decision. . . . If he could defeat Alexander in a future conflict, his family would be safe, but until then they needed to remain in Macedonian hands." At Guagamela, in 331 B.C., the last Great King "skilfully turn[ed] his chariot" once more. The ensuing "cat and mouse" game marked the close of the dynasty and the destruction of Persepolis.

Mr. Llewellyn-Jones rejects "Rise and Fall" readings of the Achaemenid demise: "The Persian empire never underwent a slow process of decline

Seven or more of the 12 Achaemenid kings were assassinated. Woe betide the ruler who ate or slept.

and eventual collapse," he suggests. "When its end came. . . . it was swift and totally unexpected." Can something "functional" and "secure" terminate abruptly without an inner decline? In his 1920 essay "The Consolations of History," E.M. Forster contended that "a civilization that passes quickly must be decadent, therefore let us censure those epochs that thought themselves so bright, let us show that their joys were hectic and their pleasures vile, and clouded by the premonition of doom." Forster's theme was how the living "can recover self-confidence by snubbing the dead"; the dead, Mr. Llewellyn-Jones argues convincingly, have been snubbed long enough.

Mr. Carter is the head of the Impressionist and modern art department at Christie's in New York.

BOOKS

Normal (adj.): 'Conforming to a type, standard, or regular pattern; characterized by that which is considered usual, typical, or routine.' —MERRIAM-WEBSTER

Bringing In the Sheaves

How to Be Normal

By Phil Christman
Belt, 231 pages, \$26

By RICHARD BABCOCK

PHIL CHRISTMAN confesses at one point in his essay collection "How to Be Normal" that his conservative, fundamentalist Baptist father probably considers his son an "easily outraged prig." Though I suspect I have little in common with the old man, I understand exactly his judgment.

In the book, Mr. Christman explores a series of concepts—masculinity, whiteness, religion, among them—and comes at his analyses from a leftist perspective that sometimes veers into contempt. ("We are ruled, locally and nationally and internationally, by greedy and silly people . . .") Though still a practicing Christian, Mr. Christman defected from a fundamentalist childhood, a break that often informs his writing. He frequently sounds exasperated and angry. His father, as Mr. Christman acknowledges, endures his son's arguments from the other side of a theological divide with studied patience.

But similar patience can pay off for a reader of these essays. Mr. Christman titles the collection and each of the essays with the "How to" format, but he points out in an author's note that this is not an advice manual.

Rather, he takes on a subject and examines the generalizations and shibboleths clinging to it, puncturing them with personal experience and his intellect—and with considerable research to back them up.

In "How to Be a Man," for example, he laments the discomfort he suffers—from strenuous workouts, needlessly grueling chores and such—to uphold some "show-boating" notion of masculinity. He considers the theory that the masculine imperative grows from an urge to protect, presumably loved ones, but discounts the idea with an array of arguments. Providing protection of that sort invokes male dominance—the dreaded gender hierarchy. It often leads to violence, he writes, and typically fails. Anyway, statistics show that women work harder than men, so who's really doing the protecting? He concludes the essay by describing a spot of manly bra-



vado that was the "stupidest thing I ever did." A youth snatched his wife's purse, and Mr. Christman chased the thief and his cohort into an alley, where the chivalrous essayist promptly lost his wallet at gunpoint. Small wonder that the author, speaking for men generally, says "we feel like a bad joke."

A personal essayist with Michigan roots unpacks the mythology of Midwestern equanimity.

In an essay dealing largely with his turn from a dogmatic Baptist creed in his late teens, Mr. Christman scathingly contends that believers aggressively deploy misinformation and warped reasoning to defend their religion. But the lesson produced turns out to be aimed squarely at intellectual hubris: "What growing up fundamentalist helped me learn early on, is how terribly wrong you can be while thinking very hard."

Mr. Christman, who teaches writing at the University of Michigan, remarks often on his small town, Michigan roots. His earlier essay collection, "Midwest Futures," explores the history and myths attached to the center of the country. He argues that the newly formed American government didn't so much see the Midwest frontier as a future home for settlers (and certainly not as the home for the peoples who then lived there) but as a "fund." A resource to be exploited. By his account, that financial perspective has infused the region, a particularly troubling development because "Midwestern" has turned into a synonym for "normal." He strikes a more sanguine note at the

end, hoping that conscientious citizens can transform the Midwest "from fund to place"—one that welcomes all and lives within its "physical limits."

He returns to the Midwest in the brief final essay in his latest collection. Here, in "How to Be Midwestern," Mr. Christman is far less polemic. He talks about jogging through a familiar, flat, bland landscape, but coming to see it as complex and strange—anything but banal. Trying to capture it, he quotes Willa Cather: "Between that earth and that sky I felt erased, blotted out." Such insights result in a suitably humble ethic: "I try not to thrust limiting assumptions on other people; I try to let people surprise me."

Throughout "How to Be Normal," the voice is earnest and intense, often spiraling around a subject, here and there punctuated by glancing, sometimes arcane cultural references. For this reader, Mr. Christman's paragraphs occasionally require a second reading, an exercise that's almost always rewarding but at times tiring.

And then he delivers a crystalline passage such as this, the opening of "How to Be Married":

"For some of us, there's a season on the cusp of young adulthood—around sixteen or seventeen—when all the deepest failings and yearnings of your nature announce themselves one after the other, like symphonic themes that the rest of your life will restate with greater complexity, perhaps, but never again so pristinely."

Mr. Christman goes on to tell the story of his own fulfilling relationship to a woman with whom he fell in love as a teen. They drifted apart, felicitously reconnected and

finally married. By his account, she holds in her heart and mind both the love-stunned teenager he was and the complicated 40-something man he has become.

At the beginning of "How to Be Midwestern," Mr. Christman writes, "I think nothing has shadowed my development as a writer more than my failure to have an interesting childhood." Yet in anecdotes and asides, he drops in scraps that belie that assessment: His father, himself abused as a child, works assiduously to treat his son with kindness. Their conflicts are soothed by a common passion for bad movies. ("Zontar, the Thing From Venus" to the rescue!) As a teenager, Mr. Christman impregnated his girlfriend and had to apologize to the congregation of his fundamentalist Baptist church. His sister's eighth-grade class played Led Zeppelin songs backward to sound out the hidden Satanic messages.

His gloomy assessment of his childhood also belies a Whitmanesque point he returns to several times in "How to Be Normal"—that we contain within us a full range of selves, "sheaves" to be gathered. We are all like one of his beloved bad movies, "desperate and self-deluded and wholly compelling." In short, that tedious boyhood in a small Midwestern town produced a writer who has much more to offer us.

But as for the promise of comfort suggested by the title of this book, Mr. Christman has some disappointing news: "There is no normal to get back to anymore."

Mr. Babcock is a novelist and the former editor of Chicago magazine.

MYSTERIES

TOM NOLAN

The Heat Of the Campaign



'HOT TIME' (Arcade, 274 pages, \$26.99), a historical mystery by W. H. Flint, takes place in New York City during the torrid month of August 1896. The metropolis is enduring a sweltering "hot wave" which will kill nearly 1,500 people.

Hardest hit are the immigrants cramped into suffocating tenement apartments. Police Commissioner Theodore Roosevelt is under pressure to relieve some of the city's suffering; his reform efforts are encouraged by his assistant, Otto "Rafe" Raphael, one of the first Jewish officers on the city's police force.

Roosevelt's activism is not politically popular, and politics are at a fever pitch in the city. The Republican Party is pitting staid, pro-business William McKinley in the upcoming presidential election against the populist Democrat William Jennings Bryan, who's scheduled for an imminent event in Madison Square Garden.

THIS WEEK

Hot Time
By W.H. Flint

The banker J.P. Morgan, whose black eyes "would fix on a man like a snake studying its prey," alerts Roosevelt to the black-mailing activities of a

Manhattan publisher threatening to run embarrassing stories about prominent McKinley supporters—including Roosevelt and Morgan—unless paid exorbitant monthly fees.

"Have him into the office for a little chat," Morgan urges the commissioner. But the scurrilous publisher so enrages Roosevelt, he ejects the man bodily from his office. Roosevelt and Morgan then turn for help to McKinley's campaign manager, Mark Hanna, who agrees: "This [man] must be stopped. I'll take care of it." Soon after, the publisher is found in an alley, dead from a fatal blow to the head.

The pseudonymous author of "Hot Time" has written about Roosevelt and Morgan in previous books, and he evokes the era well. The commissioner seems content with the convenient verdict that the killing was motivated by robbery, and he warns his man Rafe to leave the case alone. But Rafe, who dreams of becoming "the department's first Jewish detective," is encouraged by Roosevelt's friendly stenographer Minnie Kelly to unravel the mystery. "He had never investigated so much as a lost dog before," Rafe knows. "What made him think he could solve a murder on his own?"

With the aid of a resourceful newsboy who glimpsed the publisher's killer, Rafe pursues his private investigation. He hears of another villainous scheme in the works, centered around Bryan's event at the Garden. The would-be detective races through the streets of New York to catch a murderer and rescue his own endangered career. The result is a suspenseful and satisfying escapade, worthy of its intriguing setting and larger-than-life supporting cast.

Weirdness Has Its Own Integrity



FICTION
SAM SACKS

'The father of modernist Persian literature' wrote in the idiom of Edgar Allan Poe and the French surrealists.

THE CONCEPT of the "minor classic" has gained increasing purchase in the book world, following the model of NYRB Classics and similar reprint series devoted to lesser-known works. The category's strength is its elasticity, as it allows publishers to affix classic status on a wide range of titles based on diverse criteria while skirting onerous and politically fraught debates about the canon. The refocusing is especially noteworthy in the case of Penguin Classics, whose original mission of making great literature accessible to mass readerships has evolved to making mass readerships conscious of a broader definition of great literature.

A fascinating recent example of this undertaking is the 1936 novel "**Blind Owl**" (Penguin Classics, 87 pages, \$14), by Sadeq Hedayat, described by translator Sassan Tabatabai as "the father of modernist Persian literature." Born into an aristocratic Tehran family in 1903, Hedayat escaped the Shah's repressive regime by living in France and India, where he wrote prolifically until his suicide in 1951. But it is the eerie, phantasmal "Blind Owl," influenced by the Gothic horror of Edgar Allan Poe and French surrealists such as Comte de Lautréamont and André Breton, that disordered the venerable traditions of Persian literature and most interests scholars today.

The two-part novella uncorks the nightmare visions of

a misanthropic, opium-addled narrator who appears to live alone in a small room subsisting on money he gets from painting pen-case covers. In the first (and far more exciting) section, he describes the midnight visitation of a beautiful, spectral woman who proceeds to die in his bed, at which point he paints a likeness of her eyes and then dismembers her corpse for burial in a haunted forest. The second part is the narrator's written confession of his tormented marriage to a cruel and unfaithful wife, which also dissolves into a hallucinatory ferment of lust, paranoia and necromancy.

The macabre, opium-induced slideshow imagery of the scenes speaks to the profound influence of the French avant-garde, though arresting specifics remind us of Hedayat's Persian origins—the sight of a "tarred, black sky . . . like a worn chador," or kisses that carry "a bitter, acrid taste, like the butt end of a cucumber." This is a mannered, dandyish kind of squalor, and read today, the passages can cross from sensuous into silly. ("The fringes of the sky were covered with dense, yellow clouds that weighed down on the entire town. They were besmeared with death. The weather was dreadful and delightful.") But weirdness has its own integrity, and "Blind Owl" possesses the fully dimensional oddness of a vivid dream, which one

can mine for interpretations, analyze for influences or simply submit to.

Another perfect candidate for the designation "minor classic" is Max Blecher, a Romanian Jewish medical student who in 1928, at age 19, was diagnosed with spinal tuberculosis. For the remaining 10 years of his life Blecher moved among sanatoriums, enduring agonizing surgeries

THIS WEEK

Blind Owl

By Sadeq Hedayat

The Lighted Burrow

By Max Blecher

Sedating Elaine

By Dawn Winter

and remaining mostly bedridden while reading and writing at a furious clip.

Among his works are a series of autobiographical prose fictions, the last being the posthumously published book "**The Lighted Burrow: A Sanatorium Journal**" (Sublunary Editions, 192 pages, \$14), which arrives in a bracing new translation by Christina Tudor-Sideri.

With disarming amiability, Blecher melds philosophical reflections with anecdotes from sanatorium life. The tortures of lab-rat-like procedures sit alongside piquant episodes in the surrounding countryside. The descriptions, especially

those of the surgeries, are hyper-realist, yet a hint of fantasy accompanies every scene, because it's unclear whether events are real or the daydreams of an invalid. Indeed, Blecher recognizes no distinction between the two: "It is, I believe, the same thing to live or to dream an experience, and everyday real life is all the more hallucinatory and peculiar than the life of sleep."

Yet daydreams, however frequent, offer no escape from infirmity. For Blecher, all things, even the figments of imagination, are physiological, aspects of "the world of pure blood, the world of arterial beings and fibrous bodies." This makes them equally subject to the laws of putrefaction and decomposition.

Written from the precipice of death, "The Lighted Burrow" communicates a nihilism as extreme as any I have encountered.

What, then, makes this book so tender, so amusing, so companionable? Stoicism seems an inexact characterization, yet it is the case that Blecher finds much that is wondrous in his abjection. His suffering is so pointless and exaggerated that it becomes laughable; his existence so fragile and insignificant as to be marvelous. In one scene he recounts dressing up in a jester costume for a local carnival, only to learn that a fellow patient, a nun, is on her last breath. Visiting her—"harlequin and dying nun"—he ponders the fairy-tale absurdity

of the image, its equal artificiality and truth. For Blecher, the miraculous and the meaningless somehow cohere as one.

The promisingly depraved setup to British writer Dawn Winter's debut "**Sedating Elaine**" (Knopf, 257 pages, \$27) finds the down-at-heel protagonist Frances in debt to an increasingly impatient drug dealer. Frances is in a rebound relationship with Elaine, whom she despises but who comes from money. Her foolproof plan: invite Elaine to move in with her and then dose her with a powerful sedative, keeping her in a semi-conscious state until Elaine's rent money appears in her account and she can pay off her dealer and dump the broad.

The funny, sexed-up sociopathy of the premise is of a kind with the great Phoebe Waller-Bridge's sitcom "Fleabag," though like that show—and like nearly all current-day depictions of anti-heroes—the effect is blunted by the revelation of some secret trauma. Frances, it turns out, is devastated by her role in the accidental death of a child. "She thought herself capable of great evil because of one accident a long time ago, an accident guilt had apportioned blame to," Ms. Winter diagnoses in one of the spates of therapy-speak that intrude on the story. I ought to have expected this, yet I found it scandalous. Is there any sharper betrayal than when a black comedy turns into a mushy tale of redemption?

BOOKS

‘NB: Where there is devotional music, God, with his Grace, is ever present.’ —J.S. BACH, MARGINAL NOTE IN HIS CALOV BIBLE

We Listen Not as Innocents

The Great Passion

By James Runcie

Bloomsbury, 272 pages, \$28

By BOYD TONKIN

ON GOOD FRIDAY in 1727, the congregation at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig faced a long haul. As well as hymns, a motet and a sermon, the solemn vespers would include a gigantic two-part oratorio composed by the church’s Cantor—the director of music—with a text taken from St. Matthew’s gospel. The service lasted through the afternoon and into the brisk April evening. What did its first hearers think of “The Passion According to St. Matthew” by Johann Sebastian Bach—who, four years previously, had arrived in the Saxon city? We simply don’t know. In his magnificent study of Bach (“Music in the Castle of Heaven”), the conductor John Eliot Gardiner can find “not the smallest shard of evidence” about contemporary reactions. The “Passion” itself then dropped into oblivion until a young musical prodigy—a baptized Jew named Felix Mendelssohn—discovered the score and revived it for a performance in Berlin in 1829.

Everyone who has since listened in awe and wonder to the “St. Matthew Passion” and sensed (in James Runcie’s words) that “nothing matters as much as this” owes a debt not just to Bach but to Mendelssohn’s visionary labor of rebirth. Musicians, conductors and directors have re-created it time and again. The ponderous massed-choir pieties of the Victorian era later yielded to the lighter, swifter mood of period-instrument versions and the semi-operatic stagings of directors such as Jonathan Miller and Peter Sellars. Faithful and faith-less agree that Bach’s layered blend of musical storytelling, commentary and reflection, as the final acts of Jesus’ life move from betrayal to crucifixion to entombment, can, Mr. Runcie writes, “give a particular voice to universal feelings.” The work itself offers no triumphant resurrection. That’s for us to find.

Mr. Runcie’s novel “The Great Passion” places the making and playing of the “St. Matthew Passion” at the climax of a plot that covers a year in the Leipzig life of Bach, his family and his colleagues. A historical novelist and former BBC radio executive, the writer has drawn on his own background—his father, Robert, served as Archbishop of Canterbury—in his thoughtful, well-crafted series of “Grantchester Mysteries” featuring a clerical sleuth. However, Bach’s masterpiece sharply raises the bar. Mr. Runcie must have felt called (like the narrator of his novel) “to perform something that was just beyond my capabilities.” The project risks bathos. Yet, in spite of a few minor wobbles, it succeeds thanks to its avoidance of cloudy rapture and to a bracing focus on the sweat and tears that drove Bach’s peerless “attempt to understand what it means to live and what it is to die.” This “Passion” unfolds in toil and travail amid the chill of drafty chambers and the stink of beasts, turnips and tobacco, with



GOLGOTHA Detail of ‘The Lamentation of Christ’ (ca. 1500) by Albrecht Dürer.

“the inevitability of loss and sorrow” as the ground-bass of each page.

Fiction often struggles to animate the minds and works of great composers; the finest examples—such as Thomas Mann’s “Doctor Faustus”—tend to view musical genius not head-on but from the wings. But the notoriously humdrum figure that Bach cuts in his letters and others’ testimony—“something of a bore,” Mr. Gardiner suggests, only to prove otherwise—leaves room for the novelist’s imagination. No oxygen-hogging demigod, but a hard-working, short-tempered craftsman, Bach the man can let the world around him breathe. Mr. Runcie shows how sublime art can bloom in mundane soil as he evokes the composer and his city through the eyes of a chorister and organ student, Stefan Silbermann. Young Stefan arrives at the St. Thomas school in 1726 after his mother’s death. His narrative spans the ensuing year (Easter to Easter), as seen in retrospect by a grown-up Stefan decades later. In his voice, the child’s naive observation merges with the man’s mature reflection on his past.

Only the book’s last quarter traces the writing, rehearsal and performance of the “Passion”—almost a Baroque take on the

classic backstage Broadway plot. (Mr. Runcie deploys a novelist’s license here: In the real world, Bach had probably drafted parts of the work a couple of years earlier.) Yet as the seasons pass and Stefan sees that “the dance of life becomes the dance of death,” each prior episode deepens the emotional tone. After falling victim to a bullying fellow singer at school, the boy lodges with the Bachs. Already stricken by his mother’s death, Stefan enters another house of grief. In 1720, Bach had lost his first wife, Maria Barbara. Soon after Stefan’s arrival, Sebastian and Anna Magdalena—the gifted singer Bach then married—see their 3-year-old daughter, Etta, die. Other children happily through the Cantor’s home, “a place without privacy and a world without secrets.” The Bachs, though, live with grief as a daily companion. They grasp that “we only know the best by experiencing the worst.”

Music helps dispel their darkness. “Love and work. That’s all there is,” Sebastian—a gruff, prickly, but not unkind figure—tells Anna Magdalena. Stefan improves his keyboard skills and, as a promising soprano in the St. Thomas choir, strives to keep up with the tricky solos and soaring choruses that punctuate the cantatas Bach writes. As the

hard-to-please Cantor chivvies and cajoles instrumentalists and singers, Mr. Runcie lightly scatters musical insights across his tale. Stefan, for instance, learns that his lungs as well as lips matter: “Your breathing becomes part of the meaning.”

This hands-on, craft-based detail helps banish the portentous rhetoric of some musical fiction. Stefan, meanwhile, nurtures a puppyish crush on Bach’s butterfly-hunting eldest daughter, Catharina. And he attends to the city’s sounds and textures: the “percussion of everyday life” that hints at how music may germinate from familiar rhythms of home and work. One truly shocking event

A novelist captures Bach rehearsing the ‘St. Matthew Passion,’ his great work ‘full of pain and love,’ for Good Friday in Leipzig, 1727.

disturbs the flow: the savagely bungled execution of a poor Jew accused of theft. In Mr. Runcie’s scheme, this gory outrage and the crowd’s jeering bigotry anticipates the scenes of mob hatred and vengeance in the “Passion” as the accused Jesus abandons hope. Later critics have found trace elements of church anti-Semitism in the work; but this Bach recoils in horror from the scaffold and laments that “people crucify Christ every day.”

Mr. Runcie’s composer has a tendency to sermonize. He indulges it a little too often: The story sags at a few prosaic moments. Still, the novelist busily varies his tone with deft cameos of characters such as the Cantor’s frivolous rival Georg Telemann and the dandyish poet Christian Friedrich Henrici, known as Picander—gaily outfitted “like a dessert at a banquet.” Picander will surpass himself to pen the granitic words of the “Passion.” Finally, the rehearsals for this work “full of pain and love” lay bare the sonic mechanics that undergird its magic. In music “as shocking and unpredictable as grief itself,” the quest for perfection becomes a kind of prayer. As Bach barks at his choir: “There is no middle ground. You are either accurate or terrible.”

Since that April afternoon in Leipzig, the “St. Matthew Passion” has enveloped its hearers not (in Mr. Runcie’s words) because it is an effective “theological lecture” or dramatic spectacle but because “it had become *our story*.” It was happening now, in the present tense. “Only music itself can capture that immediacy, but “The Great Passion” shows—without a trace of glibness—how timeless art grows out of “fragile, flawed and human” lives shadowed by fear, guilt and grief. “We listen to music as *survivors*,” Bach tells Stefan, “rather than as innocents.” Mr. Runcie reminds us that the right words, too, may help us live better amid the ruins left by time.

Mr. Tonkin, a former literary editor of the Independent, is a recent recipient of the Benson Medal of the Royal Society of Literature.

So Many Ways to Tell a Tale



CHILDREN'S BOOKS
MEGHAN COX GURDON

Some stories are oral and improvised for an interactive audience. Others are artfully written down and meant to travel far.

WHEN CHILDREN are engrossed in a story that someone is telling them, or reading to them, they’ll often sit in the state of what appears to be stupefaction. With their mouths slightly open and their eyes gazing into the middle distance, their bodies are in the room, but their minds are somewhere else. On other occasions, children find a story so electrifying that they can’t help butting in with questions and predictions.

This second kind of enthralment, fun for the listeners if sometimes exasperating for the teller, is what prevails in “**A Dragon Used to Live Here**” (Candlewick, 256 pages, \$17.99), a sparkling chapter book by Annette LeBlanc Cate. Ingeniously layered, yet infused with a feeling of lively informality, the story begins with two “little nobles,” Emily and Thomas, coming upon a hidden workshop in the castle ruled by their parents. Inside, the children discover a quirky cohort of scribes who are responsible for producing invitations, place cards and other triumphs of penmanship for the royal household. The boss of the crew is a sardonic wit named Meg who initially rebuffs the curious children but in time allows herself to be induced—Emily and Thomas bribe her with baked goods—to unspool a story of elves, pixies, a great dragon and a tennis match that ruined a friendship.

From one suspenseful chapter to the next (with frequent interruptions and digressions), Meg tells all about the dragon and its depredations, some about the courtship of the children’s parents, and frustratingly little

THIS WEEK

A Dragon Used to Live Here

By Annette LeBlanc Cate

Endlessly Ever After

By Laurel Snyder
Illustrated by Dan Santat

The Book That Kibo Wrote

By Mariana Ruiz Johnson

about the sundering of her old friendship with their mother. Ms. Cate has an admirably playful way of introducing esoteric words into the story so that children will understand them: She mentions a gibbous moon (“when it’s the squashier shape”), a jousting device called a quintain (“sort of like a false assailant that swings at you”), and caparisons, those “little blankets” worn by magnificent steeds. But can Meg’s story possibly be true, or is she making it up as she goes along? Thomas doubts, but Emily believes it all. Humorous ink illustrations by the author add buoyancy to this engaging read-aloud for children ages 7-11.

Laurel Snyder has built narrative unpredictability into the structure of “**Endlessly Ever After**” (Chronicle, 92 pages, \$18.99), a picture book that will have children flapping the pages back and forth depending on where their curiosity leads them. Illustrated by Dan Santat with his customary luminous dynamism, the book begins with a scene that readers ages 5-8 will recognize: a mother is sending her young daughter off through the woods with a basket for Grandma: “Now take this cake, to cheer her up, and have a lovely day. / But mind the path! For danger tends to lurk along the way.”

Immediately the girl, Rosie, has to make a decision. Should she wear her little red hooded cape or her cozy faux fur? If the red hood, readers must turn to page 6; if the fur, to page 20. Each option vaults Rosie, and the reader, into a different dramatic circum-

stance that will require yet more choices. She may meet a woodsman carrying a goose that lays golden eggs, or children bewitched in a house of candy, or a sleeping beauty in a tower: “Now what, Rosie? Are you really going to kiss some strange sleeping woman in a frozen castle covered with roses? Seriously? Yes, life is an adventure! Turn to page 48. No, ew! Of course not. Kissing’s for teenagers. Turn to page 36.” Mixing and matching elements of well-known fairy tales, Ms. Snyder and Mr. Santat have created a raucous read and a sly tribute to the joys of improvisational storytelling.

In “**The Book That Kibo Wrote**” (Eerdmans, 26 pages, \$17.99), Mariana Ruiz Johnson shows how a story can both transport and be transported. On a grassy plain, a bespectacled rhino named Kibo, who rides a bike and wears

a collared shirt, spends his evenings recording his impressions. (See below.) “He wrote about the red sky of the savanna,” we’re told, and “the silhouettes of the birds, the buzz of the bugs.” Above him, a crane in an acacia tree reads the loose pages of his journal as he writes. One night, she stitches them together into a book with yellow covers and drops it in a distant city.

Ms. Johnson’s naif digital illustrations stick to a narrow palette of yellow, red, blue and black and show city-dwellers inside their boxy apartments: A frog wears headphones and dances at a window; a bear waters a house plant; a tiger and elephant drink tea. “The first to find the yellow book was Camilo the lion,” we read. “The book’s scent reminded him of the savanna where he’d been born.” The lion likes the book so much that he passes it on to his friend Simon, a rabbit. On the book travels, affecting one reader after another with the sensory images it contains: “the warm dried mud . . . the nocturnal howls of the animals . . . the mirror-like puddles of water.” So beloved does the book become that it eventually arrives in an environment that is, in a literal way, the polar opposite of its place of origin. For readers ages 4-8, this gentle story shows not only the value of a singular vision, whether belonging to a rhino or anyone else, but also the wisdom of putting it on paper.



BOOKS

‘No captain can do very wrong if he places his ship alongside that of the enemy.’ —HORATIO NELSON

The Hunt for Alabama

To the Uttermost Ends of the Earth

By Phil Keith with Tom Clavin
Hanover Square, 316 pages, \$29.99

By JONATHAN W. JORDAN

GOOD NAVAL-PURSUIT stories walk a fine line. Days and nights of dull watches and putrid food are punctuated by the terrors of sea storms and savage battles. Balance and pacing are crucial to the story’s flow. From Herman Melville’s “Moby-Dick” to C.S. Forester’s “The Last Nine Days of the Bismarck,” sea-hunt tales, when done right, combine “man versus nature” and “man versus man” conflicts into a single narrative.

In “To the Uttermost Ends of the Earth,” Phil Keith and Tom Clavin—whose many books on American history include a previous collaborative effort, “All Blood Runs Red” (2019)—dive into the true story of two naval commanders who played a deadly game of cat-and-mouse across the Atlantic Ocean during the American Civil War.

Because the opposing navies were unevenly matched, big naval battles were rare. Lacking the resources to produce more than a handful of capital ships, the Confederate Navy resorted to asymmetrical warfare: Riverine defense, blockade-breaking and commerce-raiding summed up its roles. The U.S. Navy’s job was more formidable: Gideon Welles, Lincoln’s grizzled secretary of the Navy, directed the fleet to support Union armies near the coasts and rivers, to protect American trade with Europe, and to clamp an economic tourniquet on the South by blockading its ports.

The U.S. Navy’s longest-running mission was to sink CSS Alabama, the most successful Confederate commerce raider of the war. Built near Liverpool, England, Alabama could move under sail or steam power, making her one of the fastest warships on the waves. The presence of her 10 heavy guns meant she rarely had to fire on Yankee merchant ships; her usual method was to stop the merchantman, bring her crew aboard, burn the ship and deposit the crew at the nearest port. Then off to sea again.

From her commissioning in August 1862 to her final battle in June 1864, Alabama sent 52 Union merchant ships and \$6 million worth of cargo to the Atlantic floor, and sank the Union gunboat Hatteras in a fight off the Texas coast. Northern newspapers raged. The U.S. Navy ranked the destruction of Alabama and her sisters, CSS Florida and Georgia, as one of its top priorities.

To sink Alabama, the United States deployed three-masted “sloops of war” that, like their Confederate prey, could run on either wind or steam. The seven-gun steamer USS Kearsarge, launched in 1861, plied the Atlantic waters from Spain to the Gulf of Mex-



FINAL ENCOUNTER ‘Destruction of the Confederate Steamer Alabama by the U.S. Ironclad Kearsarge, June 19, 1864’ (1864) by Edwin Hayes.

ico chasing rumors and old sightings of Alabama and her crew. Alabama evaded the seaborne posse by sticking to the North Atlantic and Europe’s coast—and sailed around Africa, capturing merchantmen as far away as the South China Sea.

The Union Navy plied the Atlantic waters from the Gulf of Mexico to Spain, chasing rumors of the Confederates’ fearsome warship.

“To the Uttermost Ends of the Earth” trains its spyglass on two captains who sailed under opposing flags. Raphael Semmes was a Maryland-born adventurer who rose to the rank of commander in the U.S. Navy. When his adopted state of Alabama seceded in January 1861, he resigned his commission to serve the Confederacy. During the war’s first full year, the Confederate government assigned him to command Alabama.

Semmes’s prewar companion was John Winslow, a North Carolinian who, like Semmes, joined a navy of wooden

ships and rose through the ranks. In 1846, during the war with Mexico, the two Southerners shared a cabin aboard USS Cumberland and chased fleeting glory. But Winslow, an abolitionist at heart, remained loyal to the Union. He would be tasked with hunting down his old shipmate.

After establishing backstories for the captains, their ships and key officers, Messrs. Keith and Clavin turn to the hunt. In a piece of detective work out of a Patrick O’Brian novel, Winslow narrows down the likely routes Semmes could take. “The Confederate commerce raiders, at one time or another, would have to return to some port to coal, offload their prisoners, buy supplies, and make repairs,” the authors write. “Once all these points were plotted out, a solution became obvious: target the French ports, especially Brest, Calais, and possibly Cherbourg.”

As Winslow hunted the hunters, Semmes and Alabama, like their cause, began running out of steam. “As with his uniform, Semmes was frayed and tired,” the authors write. “He was well into his third year of being away from home and hearth. He confided in his journal, ‘The fact is, I am past the age when men ought to be subjected to the hardships and discomforts of the sea.’”

But neither man would back down from a fight, and when Winslow finally found Alabama at anchor at Cherbourg, both captains knew the long chase had come to an end. “Every Union captain was aware of the battering given to the Hatteras,” the authors note. “Semmes knew his former shipmate John Winslow was unlikely to be intimidated, but the Rebel captain believed his ship, even in its deteriorated condition, could beat the Kearsarge.”

The battle plays out in a rousing shot-by-shot narrative that covers the book’s final quarter. Shells fly, limbs are shattered and ships shudder under the weight of hot, flying iron. The human toll is brutal, as the authors describe in a scene aboard Alabama: “As the battle raged above, more men were being brought below. For most, there was little the surgeons could do. Shrapnel and splinters had made an unholy scarlet mess of bodies. The groans of suffering almost drowned out the noise of the explosions.”

Those not killed or wounded did not weather the storm unscathed. For Kearsarge’s gunners, the authors write, “the smoke stung their eyes until, red and watered, they could hardly see. Each roar of a gun assaulted the ears until they were temporarily deaf. It was nearly impossible to breathe as particles of gun-

powder, smoke, dust, and fumes from the ship’s stack choked their lungs nearly shut. Snaking lines wrenched arms and legs; deadly splinters flew with each shot the enemy landed; shrapnel was always flying about, and the noise and the pounding literally rattled their brains inside their skulls.”

The book’s prose is highly accessible, as when Semmes and Winslow meet aboard Cumberland: Semmes, “two years Winslow’s senior, would share Winslow’s cabin and become a pal to light cigars with at sunset, as they leaned over the taffrail and gabbed about the war.” The book is also mercifully free of the nautical jargon that regularly sends fans of Patrick O’Brian’s novels to Falconer’s Universal Dictionary of the Marine.

“To the Uttermost Ends of the Earth,” completed after Phil Keith died last year, is entertaining from beginning to end, though its pace is slowed at times when delving into the backstories of other ships and characters. For fans of O’Brian and Forester, it is a welcome addition to the lore of navies whose sailors braved storms and shrapnel in a war for America’s destiny.

Mr. Jordan is the author of “Lone Star Navy: Texas, the Fight for the Gulf of Mexico, and the Shaping of the American West.”

Bestselling Books | Week Ended April 9

With data from NPD BookScan

Hardcover Nonfiction

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
The Mothers and Daughters of... Shannon Bream/Broadside	1	2	Recessional David Mamet/Broadside	6	New
Half Baked Harvest Every Day Tieghan Gerard/Clarkson Potter	2	1	Nowhere for Very Long Brianna Madia/HarperOne	7	New
Atomic Habits James Clear/Avery	3	3	Bittersweet Susan Cain/Crown	8	New
Atlas of the Heart Brené Brown/Random House	4	4	Forever Boy Kate Swenson/Park Row	9	New
Time Is a Mother Ocean Vuong/Penguin Press	5	New	Glucose Revolution Jessie Inchauspe/Simon & Schuster	10	New

Nonfiction Ebooks

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
The Mothers and Daughters of... Shannon Bream/Broadside	1	2
Half Baked Harvest Every Day Tieghan Gerard/Clarkson Potter	2	1
Atomic Habits James Clear/Avery	3	3
Atlas of the Heart Brené Brown/Random House	4	4
Recessional David Mamet/Broadside	5	New
Time Is a Mother Ocean Vuong/Penguin Press	6	New
Bittersweet Susan Cain/Crown	7	New
Glucose Revolution Jessie Inchauspe/Simon & Schuster	8	New
Nowhere for Very Long Brianna Madia/HarperOne	9	New
The Body Keeps the Score Bessel van der Kolk/Penguin	10	8

Nonfiction Combined

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
The Mothers and Daughters of... Shannon Bream/Broadside	1	2
Half Baked Harvest Every Day Tieghan Gerard/Clarkson Potter	2	1
Atomic Habits James Clear/Avery	3	3
Atlas of the Heart Brené Brown/Random House	4	4
Recessional David Mamet/Broadside	5	New
Time Is a Mother Ocean Vuong/Penguin Press	6	New
Bittersweet Susan Cain/Crown	7	New
Glucose Revolution Jessie Inchauspe/Simon & Schuster	8	New
Nowhere for Very Long Brianna Madia/HarperOne	9	New
The Body Keeps the Score Bessel van der Kolk/Penguin	10	8

Hardcover Fiction

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
The Flames of Hope Tui T. Sutherland/Scholastic	1	New
How to Catch the Easter Bunny Adam Wallace/Sourcebooks Wonderland	2	4
It’s Not Easy Being a Bunny Marilyn Sadler/Random House Young Readers	3	3
Run, Rose, Run James Patterson & Dolly Parton/Little, Brown	4	2
Sea of Tranquility Emily St. John Mandel/Knopf	5	New

Fiction Ebooks

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
My Evil Mother Margaret Atwood/Amazon Original Stories	1	1
Lover Arisen J.R. Ward/Simon & Schuster	2	xx
Sea of Tranquility Emily St. John Mandel/Knopf	3	New
A Family Affair Robyn Carr/Harlequin	4	New
An Offer From a Gentleman Julia Quinn/Avon	5	6
The Viscount Who Loved Me Julia Quinn/Avon	6	5
The Duke and I Julia Quinn/Avon	7	—
What Happened to the Bennetts Lisa Scottoline/Putnam	8	2
When Blood Lies C.S. Harris/Berkley	9	New
Verity Colleen Hoover/Grand Central	10	8

Fiction Combined

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
My Evil Mother Margaret Atwood/Amazon Original Stories	1	1
The Flames of Hope Tui T. Sutherland/Scholastic	2	New
How to Catch the Easter Bunny Adam Wallace/Sourcebooks Wonderland	3	—
Chainsaw Man Vol. 10 Tatsuki Fujimoto/VIZ Media	4	New
It’s Not Easy Be Bunny Marilyn Sadler/Random House Young Readers	5	—
Where the Crawdads Sing Delia Owens/Putnam	6	2
It Ends With Us Colleen Hoover/Atria	7	4
Run, Rose, Run James Patterson & Dolly Parton/Little, Brown	8	3
Verity Colleen Hoover/Grand Central	9	5
Jujutsu Kaisen Vol. 15 Gege Akutami/VIZ Media	10	New

Methodology

NPD BookScan gathers point-of-sale book data from more than 16,000 locations across the U.S., representing about 85% of the nation’s book sales. Print-book data providers include all major booksellers, webretailers and food stores. Ebook data providers include all major ebook retailers. Free ebooks and those selling for less than 99 cents are excluded. The fiction and nonfiction combined lists include aggregated sales for all book formats (except audio books, bundles, boxed sets and foreign language editions) and feature a combination of adult, young adult and juvenile titles. The hardcover fiction and nonfiction lists also encompass a mix of adult, young adult and juvenile titles while the business list features only adult hardcover titles. Refer questions to Teresa.Vozzo@wsj.com.

Hardcover Business

TITLE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK
Atomic Habits James Clear/Avery	1	1
StrengthsFinder 2.0 Tom Rath/Gallup	2	4
Love and Work Marcus Buckingham/Harvard Business Review	3	New
CEO Excellence Carolyn Dewar, Scott Keller & Vikram Malhotra/Scribner	4	2
Extreme Ownership Jocko Willink & Leif Babin/St. Martin’s	5	5
The Restart Roadmap Jason Tartick/Harper Leadership	6	New
Dare to Lead Brené Brown/Random House	7	6
Trust and Inspire Stephen M.R. Covey/Simon & Schuster	8	New
Principles...Changing World Order Ray Dalio/Avid Reader	9	7
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team Patrick M. Lencioni/Jossey-Bass	10	9

PLAY

NEWS QUIZ DANIEL AKST

From this week's Wall Street Journal

1. Russian central banker Elvira Nabiullina has labored to blunt Western sanctions. In the past, what device has she used to telegraph monetary messages?

- A. Socks
B. Scarves
C. Brooches
D. Wigs

2. The new headquarters of which bank will be New York's biggest all-electric building?

- A. JPMorgan
B. Morgan Stanley
C. Goldman Sachs
D. Williamsburg Savings

3. Interest on the average 30-year fixed-rate mortgage hit 5% for the first time since—when?

- A. 1987
B. 2001
C. 2007
D. 2011

4. The Russian missile cruiser Moskva sank after exploding. The U.S. confirmed Kyiv's claim that the ship was hit by Ukraine's missiles—of which kind?

- A. Mars
B. Neptune
C. Minerva
D. Zelensky

5. Police arrested a suspect in a mass subway shooting at Brooklyn's 36th Street station—in what neighborhood?

- A. Sunset Park
B. Murray Hill
C. Woodside
D. East Flatbush

Answers are listed below the crossword solutions at right.



6. What's so special about 1 bonds?

- A. Apple rarely issues long-term debt.
B. India is borrowing in dollars but will repay in rupees.
C. They help individuals borrow from themselves.
D. They'll pay an interest rate of nearly 10%.

7. Elon Musk, Twitter's biggest shareholder, offered to buy the rest of it—at roughly what valuation?

- A. \$4.3 billion
B. \$43 billion
C. \$430 billion
D. \$4.3 trillion

8. Shehbaz Sharif became Pakistan's new prime minister. Who is his predecessor?

- A. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan
B. Imran Khan
C. Salman Khan
D. Chaka Khan

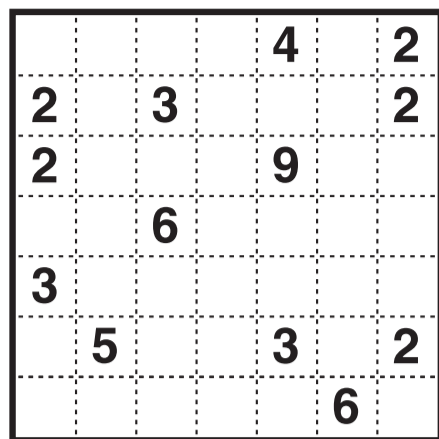
9. A Tudor-style home on the market in Omaha was an important birthplace. Who or what was born there?

- A. Marlon Brando
B. Willa Cather
C. Warren Buffett
D. Buffett Associates



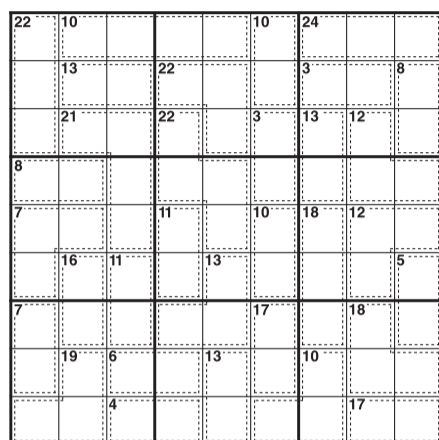
NUMBER PUZZLES

Cell Blocks



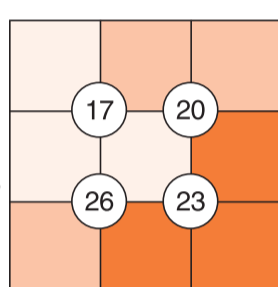
Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Killer Sudoku Level 1



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Suko



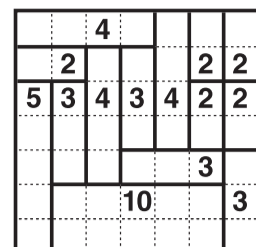
Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each color total is correct.

ALL PUZZLES © PUZZLER MEDIA LTD. - WWW.PUZZLER.COM

THEME WORDS A: FIRE. Variations: READY, AIM; B: AIR. Variations: HEIR, EYRE; C: EARTH. Variations: HEART, HATER; D: WATER. Variations: WAITER, WASTER.
ACROSS 6. B + LESS 12. POBOY (first letters) 14. TR(IE)S 15. DE + CREE 16. STAT + IC 20. O + SAGE 23. SEA(M)S 25. O + PER + A 32. G + RAVES 33. TEASER (anag.) 36. C(OR)OT 37. SUEZ 38. NE + EDY
DOWN 3. I + M(IT)ATE 4. T + READS 5. R + ODIN 7. LOCHS ("locks" hom.) 9. SLEIGHTS ("slights" hom.) 10. ST(E)REO ("store" anag.) 13. BE(COM)E 16. SET PIECE (anag.) 19. Y + EAGER 21. ABREAST (anag.) 22. S + OFTEN 24. SAVERS ("savors" hom.) 26. RE(SO)D 27. A + R + ROW 31. RACE (odd letters) 35. tRUE

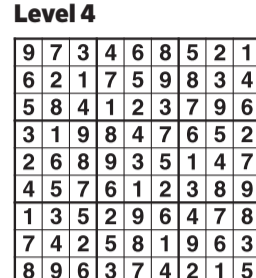
SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S PUZZLES

Cell Blocks

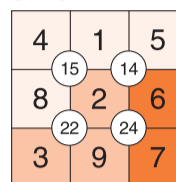


For previous weeks' puzzles, and to discuss strategies with other solvers, go to WSJ.com/puzzles.

Killer Sudoku Level 4



Suko



Tee for Too

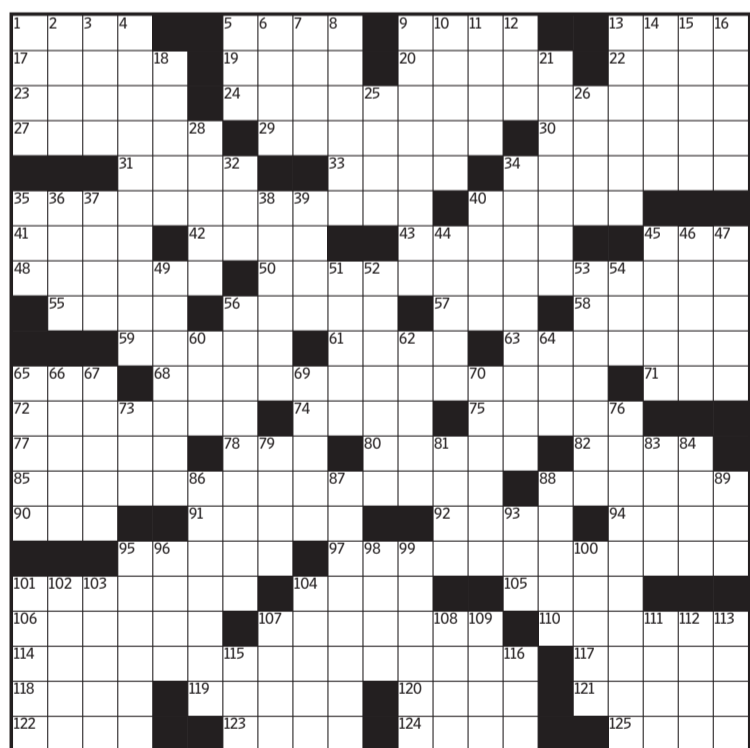


Theme and Variations

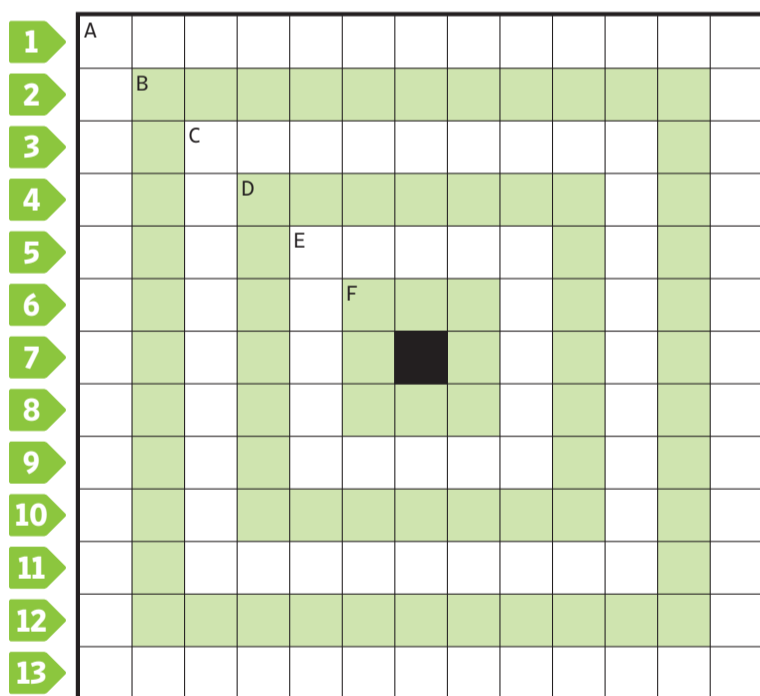


Answers to News Quiz: 1.C, 2.A, 3.D, 4.B, 5.A, 6.D, 7.B, 8.B, 9.D

THE JOURNAL WEEKEND PUZZLES edited by MIKE SHENK



- 34 Conference teams often have them
35 Big name in cosmetics
36 Not in port
37 Cultivate
38 Cheap
39 Sign of amusement
40 What a baker has on hand?
44 Rene of "Thor"
45 Pancake pile
46 "Gesundheit" preceder
47 Technical skill
49 Product protest
51 Shrimping net
52 Books in pews
53 The Dalai Lama, for one
54 Union pledge
56 Eager and then some
60 California's Big ___
62 Cultural spirit
64 Abbr. in a baby announcement
65 Chip, across the pond
66 Word from a grateful German
67 Took off
69 Orchestral tuners
70 Civil rights activist C.K.
73 What a slash may stand for
76 VIP of the present day?
79 Carpentry leveler
81 Brink of night
83 Bankrupt
84 Hunger strike?
86 Back in Congress
87 Beseches
88 Followed a lob's path
89 Soap component
93 Great Basin tribe
95 Moment to act
96 Real hoot
98 Surfing destination
99 Smyth's sounds
100 Court play
101 Succeeding
102 Italian label since 1913
103 "Soul" studio
104 Put in a seat
107 "Pardon me..."
108 Minor injury?
109 Seasonal lights locale
111 Food for Fido
112 Orange layer
113 Disgruntled
115 Simple top
116 Shortest answer from a Magic 8 Ball



Marching Bands by Mike Shenk

- Answer words in this grid march both across ("Rows") and around ("Bands"). Each Row has two answer words to be entered across, from left to right. Their dividing point is for you to determine, except in row 7, where the words are separated by a black square. Each Band has answer words to be entered clockwise, in a continuous string around the shaded or unshaded band, starting at a lettered square (A-F) and ending in the space below that square. The dividing points in each Band's string of words are also for you to determine. All clues are in order. When you are done, each square will have been used twice, once in a Row word and once in a Band word.
1 > Primary hub for Alaska Airlines, familiarly (Hyph.)
2 > Emphatic denial (2 wds.)
3 > Be a muse for
4 > Spot for a passport, at times (2 wds.)
5 > Becomes ready to read, as a desk drive (2 wds.)
6 > Indefinable quality
7 > Overly sentimental movie
8 > Prepare to explode
9 > Unusually pale
10 > "I will not be right back after this message," for Merv Griffin, e.g.
11 > Live
12 > Met patron, perhaps (2 wds.)
13 > Politician who appeared on a national presidential ticket five times
14 > Becomes obsessed
15 > "Night of the Living Dead" director George A. ___
16 > Flier's assignment
17 > Offering from Stella Adler and Lee Strasberg (2 wds.)
18 > Split off from
19 > What a criminal without a conscience feels (2 wds.)
20 > Going rates? (2 wds.)
21 > Teeming with (2 wds.)
22 > Makeup of a limerick or haiku (2 wds.)
23 > Warehouse platform
24 > World Series winners in 1906, 1917 and 2005 (2 wds.)
25 > Mutinying, say (2 wds.)
26 > Tranquil state
27 > At the time of
28 > Ornamental shrub with clusters of pink flowers
29 > Eurasian mammal resembling a weasel
30 > Any of six in a pair of Levi's 501 jeans
31 > Hobbling, say
32 > Cut off, in a way
33 > "Let It Go" singer
34 > Charity event
35 > 14th-century Italian poet
36 > Saucer-shaped squash
37 > Liquid hydrogen undergoes it in a bubble chamber
38 > Dr. Zira and Dr. Zaius, in a 1968 film
39 > Not a member of the group

Fashionably Late by Caitlin Reid

- Across
1 Things to play or beat
5 Flat-bottomed hauler
9 Polliwog parent
13 Draped garment
17 Work with oils
19 Tony nominee Merediz of "In the Heights"
20 North America's second-largest lake
22 Sandwich shop choice
23 Oversight
24 Before the fashion show, the model bent over and her garment...
27 Annoyance for a commuter
29 Music's ___ Boys
30 Protégé
31 Fanaticism
33 Bundle that might be forked over?
34 They pay flat fees
35 The designer needed a fabric patch, so she consulted her...
40 Tearing up
41 "Like that could ever happen!"
42 Peephole place
43 Ambition
45 Ink pouch, e.g.
48 Red carpet walkers
50 Disaster struck when her sewing machine broke, leaving her...
55 "And I'll add..."
56 Indiana Jones's actual first name
57 Mo. baseball team, on scoreboards
58 State whose capitol gift shop sells a plush Spuddy Buddy
59 Food industry giant
61 City just north of Des Moines
63 1987 movie with the tagline "The future of law enforcement"
65 Some concert merch
68 She'd iron on the patch, but it was too big and had to be...
71 Ring stats
72 Harmonious relationship
74 Unexciting
75 Puts through the wringer
77 Coastal cove
78 Bear, in Barcelona
80 Mining deposits
82 Group of more than 50?
85 Her colleague chimed in and said, "That patch isn't the problem, your..."
88 Many a garden flower
90 Favorite
91 Refracting object
92 Curved line in music
94 Hardly huge
95 Altar boy?
97 The outfit did need something different, prompting a last-minute...
101 Put on the board, say
104 Carrier to Ben Gurion Airport
105 Fed. workplace discrimination fighter
106 Snack brand since 1932
107 Song often accompanied by a ukulele
110 Exercise swimmingly?
114 Ack! The show is starting and they still need a...
117 Modern diet based on a nonmodern era
118 Pale yellow cheese
119 Volleyball star Gabrielle
120 Hand over
121 "Awesome!"
122 Red inside
123 Experts in CPR
124 Spots
125 It's just under a foot
Down
1 Paper piece
2 Challenge
3 Tabloid filler
4 Big yawn
5 Sound of sorrow
6 Sandwich shop choice
7 World of Warcraft brute
8 Condiment with a kick
9 "It's good enough"
10 Less common navel variety
11 Museo del Prado pieces
12 Exclamation uttered with a head slap
13 Jackson's bill
14 Speak from a dais
15 Minecraft maven, maybe
16 Vaulted areas
18 More loyal
21 Unbeatable foes
25 Ruler of the past
26 En route
28 Midnight trips to the fridge
32 Language similar to Thai

REVIEW

ICONS

A Shocking Showman

The British painter Walter Sickert made art out of rowdy music halls and notorious criminal cases.

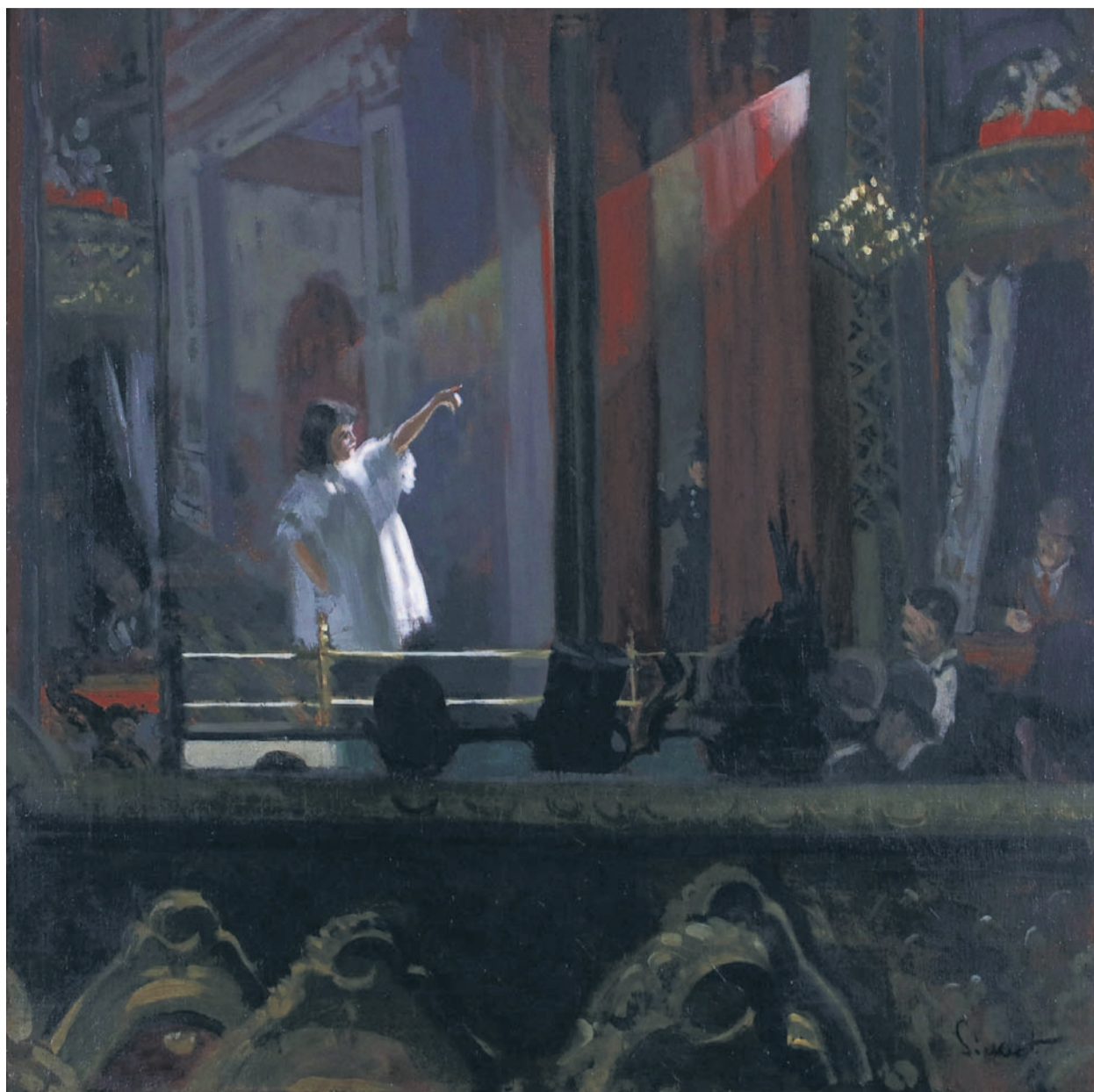
By TOBIAS GREY

As a former stage actor with a love of Shakespeare, the British painter Walter Sickert liked to inject an element of showmanship into his painting. His early fame in the late 1880s sprang from his depictions of London's rowdy music halls, where he saw an opportunity to portray English popular culture the way that French artists like Edgar Degas and Édouard Manet had done with cafe culture in Paris.

"Walter Sickert," a new show opening April 28 at Tate Britain in London and then moving to Paris's Petit Palais in September, "aims to remind British audiences of the importance of France in Sickert's work and reintroduce him to French audiences," says lead curator Emma Chambers. It is London's biggest Sickert retrospective in more than 30 years, featuring over 150 paintings, sketches, etchings and pastels. "He is someone who has ideas and connections that thread right through the 20th century for British art," says Ms. Chambers, curator for modern British art at the Tate. "But he remains rather under-regarded, which we hope this exhibition will change."

Sickert was born in Munich in 1860, the eldest son of Oswald Sickert, a Danish-German artist, and his wife Eleanor, a seamstress. The family moved to London in 1869. In 1881 Sickert enrolled at the Slade School of Fine Art, but he soon left to become a pupil of the American-born artist James McNeill Whistler. The Tate Britain show includes some of Whistler's panel paintings of street scenes and little shop-fronts in Dieppe in northern France, alongside similar works by Sickert. But Sickert was "not really a plein-air painter in the sense that Whistler was," Ms. Chambers says. "He was someone who very much worked from studies, which he then painted up in his studio."

In this respect he followed the example of Degas, who became a close friend. Degas's scenes of Parisian music halls had been ignored by other English artists, but Sickert began to spend night after night at similar gaudy venues around London and its suburbs, making tiny drawings of the performers and their boisterous audiences, which he captioned with color notes to refer to later. The paintings that resulted, such as "Little Dot Hetherington at the Old Bedford" (1888-89), the poster-image for the Tate show, express rich pictorial



Walter Sickert, 'Little Dot Hetherington at the Old Bedford' (1888-89).

ing told by his landlady that she suspected the previous occupant of his room had been the serial killer known as Jack the Ripper, has often been connected with the "Camden Town Murder" paintings in the popular imagination. The American crime writer Patricia Cornwell even suggested in her 2002 book "Portrait of a Killer" that Sickert himself was Jack the Ripper and that his paintings revealed a history of violence against women.

The theory has been largely discredited, especially as letters that Sickert wrote suggest he was abroad for much of 1888, when Jack the Ripper's murders took place. "Cornwell's book is really just conjecture," Ms. Chambers says. "Sickert was interested in the case of Jack the Ripper, just as he was interested in other popular culture headlines."

However, Ms. Cornwell continues to stand by the findings of her book. "I have not changed my opinion," she said in an interview. "The one thing I would tell you is...I should have presented

'He wanted to be someone who was always pushing boundaries.'

EMMA CHAMBERS
Curator

dramas full of light and darkness. "The music hall pictures were really something quite unusual at that point," says the show's co-curator Thomas Kennedy. "They weren't greatly received by critics when they were first shown in London, because they didn't depict high-class entertainment, as such."

Sickert's appetite for unvarnished reality extended to his nudes, several of which feature in the Tate exhibi-

tion. Sickert's depiction of unidealized female bodies in paintings such as "La Hollandaise" (ca. 1906) set him on another collision course with British critics, whose tastes were more attuned to the decorous nudes of artists like Lawrence Alma-Tadema. The exhibition highlights the French influence on Sickert's approach, displaying nudes by Degas and Pierre Bonnard.

"Sickert is never really part of the mainstream of British painting, but always slightly at an angle to it," Ms. Chambers says. "This was out of choice because he wanted to be someone who was always pushing boundaries." That quality helped him become an influence on future British painters like Lucian Freud, whose "Naked Portrait" (1972-73) is included in the show.

There was sometimes a provoca-

tive edge to Sickert's experiments. The exhibition includes his famous series of paintings "The Camden Town Murder," named after a real-life 1907 crime involving the killing of a prostitute in north London. The four paintings from 1908, which depict a naked woman lying on a bed and a dressed man, can be read in different ways that do not necessarily suggest a murder has taken place. "Certainly Sickert was an artist who had an eye to the popular press," Ms. Chambers says. "He knew the title of those paintings would get a lot of attention."

His taste for the macabre also inspired the painting "Jack the Ripper's Bedroom" (1907), which Mr. Kennedy says was not included in the exhibition due to space limitations. This work, which Sickert painted after be-

ing the information and let other people decide for themselves, instead of being so quick to tell everyone what to think. I regret that."

The last part of the Tate exhibition shows how the popular press came to fascinate Sickert and inspire him as an artist. In the 1930s he began to use a grid system to blow up small black-and-white news photographs into large paintings. One such picture from 1932, depicting the British stage actress Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, is over 6 feet high.

"Sickert died in 1942, so he did this painting 10 years before he died," Mr. Kennedy says. "Yet, here he is creating a whole new way of making paintings. It is something so innovative that was being done years before the Pop Art movement in America and here in Britain."

MASTERPIECE | 'A DANCE TO THE MUSIC OF TIME' (C. 1634), BY NICOLAS POUSSIN

Classical Imagery Does a Two-Step

By MARY TOMPKINS LEWIS

THE HIGHLY STRUCTURED and deeply cerebral paintings of Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) have long positioned him as the father of the French Baroque school, and of a revived classical tradition that would be reflected in the art of countless artists to come. Many of Poussin's early works, however—produced during years of study in Rome—were filled with depictions of wine-soaked revelries, frenzied passions and, especially, scenes of dance. Though often tied to his dissolute life as a young painter in Italy and to his admiration for the Venetian artist Titian (known for his painterly bacchanals), Poussin's Roman works tell a far richer story.

His "A Dance to the Music of Time" (Wallace Collection, London) of c. 1634 is one of his most resplendent iterations of this signature early theme. The painting perfectly encapsulates how the subject of dance allowed Poussin to showcase his fluency in classical imagery and to explore the expressive potential of the body in motion—and how, in time, he would distill its rhythmic order and measured beauty in his art. A magisterial study in monumental form and arrested movement gleaned from his study of the past, it would inform the whole of his achievement.

Poussin arrived in Rome in 1624 and stayed for most of his career. Early volumetric sketches and wash drawings in the round—after Roman sarcophagi, carved marble vases, statues and fragments of stone reliefs—document his fervid absorption of the city's dazzling array of antiquities. Poussin probed the gap between painting and sculpture (or two- and three-dimensional art), and between ancient art and his own. He painstakingly measured classical sculptures in order to replicate their perfect proportions, translated their modeled forms onto flattened clay panels to capture their harmonious compositional arrangements or, conversely, transformed antique figures into malleable wax maquettes for his renowned "Grande Machine," a small mobile platform that he could rotate in his studio. This approach allowed him to analyze such formal prototypes from every angle and to paint his own three-dimensional subjects in response.

The second-century bas-relief known as "The Borghese Dancers," which Poussin admired and studied intensely, depicts a line of elegant female figures stretched out at regular intervals, their hands linked and their fluttering garments crisply carved against a shallow



The painter drew from tradition and his fascination with the body in motion.

portico as they dance in an endless, frozen continuum. His "Dance to the Music of Time" animates the sculpture's static, flattened format, and recasts its chain of dancing figures in a choreographed composition that inhabits the deep, atmospheric space of his canvas. The painting is Poussin's most unequivocal homage to the celebrated second-century fragment, and a challenge to its medium.

The canvas, set within a misty landscape and framed by a stone pillar topped by a stern, Janus-headed deity, is an erudite meditation on temporality and the transience of human life. The Olympian god Apollo, accompanied by the Hours, heralds the dawning of a

new day, his chariot's path illuminated by Aurora's falling flowers that sparkle in the morning light. Tiny putti, one with an hourglass, the other blowing bubbles, provide metaphors for the brevity of man's existence and the fragility of fame. A quartet of eloquent, statuesque figures dance slowly in a circle to the music of Father Time, tracking the changing seasons and cycles of life.

Cast in shadow and seen from behind, the beleaguered, unshod Poverty wears a withered laurel wreath as he clutches the hand of Labor, his turbaned companion and only means of escape. Her weathered face, brawny back and muscular, strangely foreshortened arms

speak to that arduous path. Beside her, but releasing her outstretched hand—as if forgetting the wages of success—a radiant, bejeweled figure of Wealth is captured in a cameo-like profile, her luminous garment falling from her shoulder as she blithely joins the solemn rondel. And finally, a voluptuous dancing Pleasure (or Luxury), graced with a floral crown, alluring beauty and a fetching, seductive gaze, rejects the proffered hand of Poverty behind her, as if indulging in the excess her station affords, and so ordains the ineluctable cycle to begin again.

Poussin's "Dance to the Music of Time" is unlike the frenzied revelries of his earliest Roman years, which often drew on the Roman poet Ovid's "Metamorphosis," and distinct from the debauched bacchanals he would paint in the later 1630s for Cardinal Richelieu in Paris. Commissioned by the scholarly prelate, poet and opera librettist Giulio Rospigliosi, who would become Pope Clement IX, its weighty imagery and correspondingly solemn style reflect an inspired collaboration between painter and patron, and may have mirrored the role of dance as a vehicle for allegory in Rospigliosi's operas for the papal court. The painting, a valentine to Poussin's early career in Rome, anticipates the sober, cerebral art of Poussin's maturity and his brilliant rejuvenation of the classical tradition.

Ms. Lewis, who taught art history for many years at Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., writes about art for the Journal and other publications.



Livin' Large
What's subtle about the new Toyota Tundra? Absolutely nothing **D8**

OFF DUTY

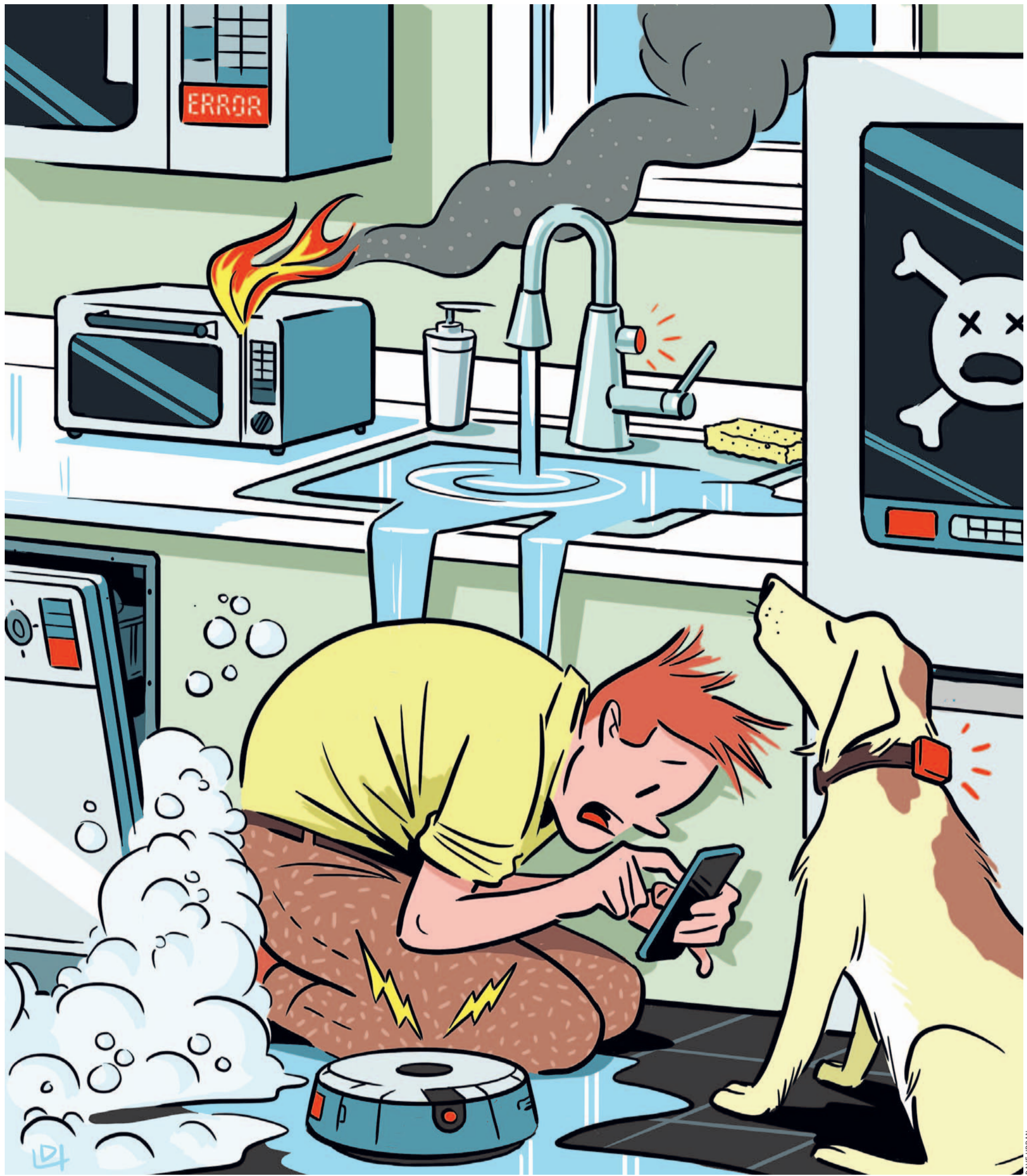
Barre Necessities
The history of the ballet flat, a spring 2022 essential **D3**



FASHION | FOOD | DESIGN | TRAVEL | GEAR

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Saturday/Sunday, April 16 - 17, 2022 | **D1**



Stressed By Our Own Devices

As so-called 'smart tech' becomes more connected, it's more prone to unexpected bugs and glitches. That's why some skeptics are turning to 'dumber' appliances and gear. A lament—and a guide

By **JUSTIN POT**

ONCE, a broken bathroom scale just displayed the wrong weight. In 2022, it won't even do that. "My scale stopped connecting to Wi-Fi, which for some reason means it won't even show the weight," said Chris Hoffman, editor in chief of How-to Geek, an online magazine devoted to helping people understand their tech. In short, he's an expert at troubleshooting broken

gadgets. But when Mr. Hoffman's scale went on the fritz, it just sat stubbornly broken on his coffee table, even after he'd read the entire manual, researched whether others had experienced the same problem, hounded customer support and coaxed the device through a complete factory reset. "I was left thinking 'Where did I go wrong with my life?'" he said.

"Smart" spins on common home appliances have been available for many years. These clever refrigerators, televisions and air conditioners perform their base functions, but also use their ability to connect

to the internet to unlock additional conveniences—letting owners, for instance, remote-control them from miles away. Generally, that level of interactivity was something you would opt into, by buying a robot vacuum, smart speakers or an Alexa-enabled microwave. But it wasn't the default.

That's changing. While some brands are aggressively bucking the trend and producing intentionally untethered devices, it's getting harder to purchase appliances and gadgets that don't need an internet connection.

Please turn to page D6

Inside



THE FENNEL FRONTIER

This spring, explore the limits of what this versatile vegetable can do **D11**



A TIME TO TIE

In fickle weather, you need a sweater handy—and some knotting know-how **D2**



EASTER EGG HUNT

One writer burrows into the lore of a symbolic Ukrainian tradition **D10**



A RIDDLE WRAPPED IN A FOREST

Deep in Canada's wilds, you'll find—if you're lucky—this mysterious getaway **D4**

STYLE & FASHION

By JAMIE WATERS

LAST NOVEMBER, Sameer Sadhu dyed his black mop a mauve so rich it would make Barney the dinosaur jealous. Though Mr. Sadhu, 34, a New York music executive, said he woke up one morning yearning to try a loud shade, his purple plan wasn't totally out of the blue. His wife had been contemplating dyeing her hair and he guesses she "put a little seed" in his head that eventually took root. He and his colorist decided lavender would best complement his skin tone, said Mr. Sadhu, who is South Asian. While the hue handily hides

'It's more normal than ever to have pink hair, but I don't know if that would fly at Goldman Sachs.'

his grays, he's more stoked by the "sense of adventure" it inspires.

Mr. Sadhu has joined a growing flock of men whose dyed crests resemble birds of paradise. These adventurous gents treat their hair like an accessory, switching colors—aqua! chartreuse! beet red!—as easily as some guys change sneakers. Other men pursue a more low-key dye agenda, opting for approachable, natural-looking shades that diminish—or enhance—their grays.

Once deemed tacky, taboo or a pitiful sign of a midlife crisis, coloring has become a viable and desirable option for men. Demand from male clients has "doubled or tripled" in the past two years, said Los Angeles colorist Daniel Moon. "It's become a thing," added Jackson Heller, the New York colorist who orchestrated "Gossip Girl" star Evan Mock's flamingo-pink buzzcut (pictured). Guys are experimenting at home, too. A 2021 report from research firm Mintel estimated that 38% of U.S. men use some form of DIY hair color, whether it's permanent or temporary—an increase from 34% in 2019.

The dye-curious—that is, those eager to address grays but wary of looking like a Lego man—should aspire to resemble Sgt. Salt 'n' Pepper himself, George Clooney, advised Mr. Moon. Instead of eliminating your grays with black or



COOL HEADS Even men in powerful positions are coloring their hair with less personal conflict.

GETTY IMAGES (MOUNT RUSHMORE, MOCK); JOÃO FAZENDA (ILLUSTRATION)

Is the Stigma of Dyeing Dead?

Men are coloring their hair every conceivable shade—from gray to aqua—with confidence and abandon

brown dye, zhooosh them up by adding darker and lighter shades of silver, which will simulate Clooney-caliber depth. Eric Chan, 34, a New York real estate manager, uses a gentle black wash that mutes his grays but lets them "show through a little bit." It looks persuasively natural and fades in a few weeks, he said, calling it "a nice option" for special occasions.

Meanwhile, bold, unnatural coloring has lost its punk-rock connotations, said Mr. Moon. It's another traditionally "feminine" look that men now casually adopt, along with nail polish, earrings and crop tops. This might be an organic extension of what Mr. Heller calls an "obvious shift" whereby men visit high-end salons instead of barbershops. Come for

the trim, stay for the tint.

Mr. Moon and Mr. Heller apply dye to clients in finance, academia and other traditional milieus, but find that the clients who choose wild hues skew young and creative. Several of Mr. Sadhu's corporate friends told him they'd like pastel hair like his but worry it could unnerve, even scandalize colleagues and bosses. "It's more normal than ever to have pink hair, but...I don't know if that would fly at Goldman Sachs," said Mr. Heller.

Besides Mr. Mock, brightly topped celebrities include sapphire-haired "Euphoria" star Dominic Fike, plus myriad musicians: At this month's Grammys, Diplo, J Balvin and the Kid Laroi looked like they'd been dunked headfirst into vats of Gatorade before hit-

ting the red carpet.

Guys have been coloring their tresses for centuries, said hair historian Rachael Gibson. She noted that Tutankhamun's tomb is decorated with engravings of men with cerulean wigs. The Romans used natural recipes to prettify their locks, she said, grinding up bugs to achieve an iridescent shimmer or applying gold dust to see if life is better as a blond. In ancient Rome's hair salons, which catered only to men, coloring would have been a "standard" service, she added.

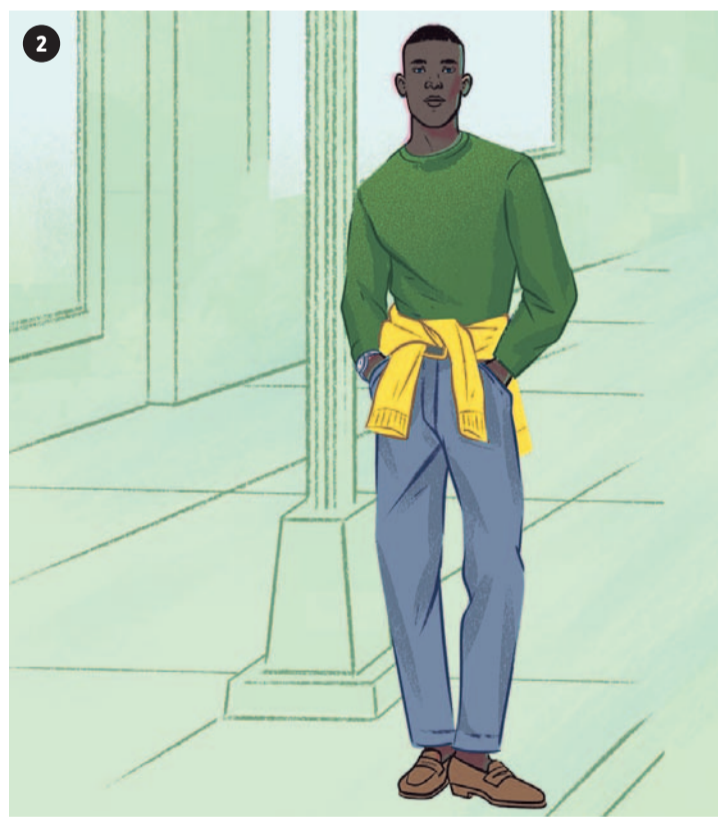
One notable downside: Coloring is a commitment. If you get it done professionally—which we recom-



Actor Evan Mock with his pink buzz cut at a New York gala in March.

mend to avoid color catastrophes like the dreaded Fanta-orange blond—you'll need to visit a salon roughly every two months. If you desire a vivid buzzcut like Mr. Mock's, it's every two weeks or so. In between, you might need to use hydrating hair masks and leave-in conditioners, said Mr. Heller.

That said, Mr. Sadhu stressed that dyeing your hair, while somewhat high-maintenance, is not a forever decision. People overthink it and assume it's "more permanent than it is," he said. His take is: "What do I truly have to lose when I do this?" Nothing but some pesky grays.



Notes on Knots

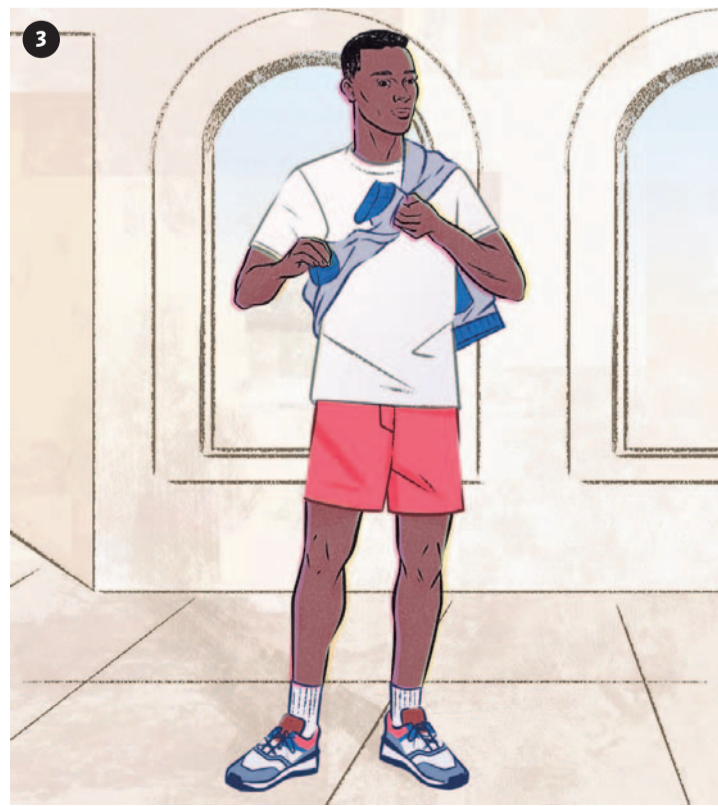
It's that time of year when you need a knit for the morning chill but are sweltering by lunch. Four simple ways to tote your sweater without wearing it.

1 The Not-So-Cold Shoulder
Consider this quintessentially preppy option when it's too hot to fully sport a sweater but you still require some back and shoulder warmth. It also subtly suggests that your childhood hero was Stan Gable, the fratty villain in "Revenge of the Nerds."

2 Tied and True
Master this foolproof, casual classic by knotting your sweater just above the hips with the back slightly folded. It's easy, unassuming and acts as a built-in cushion for those slab-like outdoor coffee-shop benches.

3 Chest Bet
Popular among members of the TikTok set (who offer abundant tying tutorials), a knit knotted across the torso is basically a sash that says "I'm carefree and stylish." It's a youthful and surprisingly practical alternative to 1. Plus, if you injure your arm, say, skateboarding, you've got an instant sling.

4 A Draggadocious Approach
Nonchalant and utterly unsanitary, this method, oft deployed by swaggering runway models, telegraphs that you're so chill (or absent-minded), you don't care if your cable-knit gets caked in sidewalk sludge. Save this tactic for May when the weather is less erratic—wearing a sweater post-drag is not advised. —Kyoko Vappaille Harris



A cashmere sweater in a springy hue that lends itself to all kinds of tying. \$228, RalphLauren.com

PAUL TULLER

STYLE & FASHION



PAS DE DEUX From left: Audrey Hepburn in black ballet flats in a photo for the 1954 film 'Sabrina'; a satin style with socks on Miu Miu's fall runway.

the cultural currency of ballet was so strong that fashion designers adopted its lexicon of tutus and fitted bodices for day and evening wear. In New York, Claire McCardell, often called "the mother of American sportswear," dug deeper, taking inspiration from practice clothes like tights and leotards to turn out soft jersey knits. In 1943, McCardell partnered with the dance brand Capezio to produce ballet slippers made with fabrics from her spring collection and soled for the street.

The demure Audrey Hepburn preferred Capezio ballet flats and helped make them a status symbol.

It was a collaboration born of necessity: Shoe rationing had been introduced that February to guarantee the military a constant supply of leather, of which it needed staggering amounts—16 million Americans served in World War II and they needed their boots frequently replaced. Consequently, designers had limited access to leather, and the rationing of chemicals used in the dye process also left them few color options. When McCardell discovered that ballet slippers were exempt from the new restrictions, she devised her ingenious solution. Her story might take on new relevance for anyone currently struggling with ongoing supply-chain disruptions.

Tory Burch's spring collection pays homage to McCardell, featuring a nod to the designer's two-toned riff on ballet flats. "Glamour, comfort and women's needs were equally important to her," said Ms. Burch of the woman who inspired her spring collection. "The ballet flat gives you all of that. I've believed that since the beginning." When she launched her brand 18 years ago, Ms. Burch's early successes included the Reva ballet flat, named for her mother.

The ballet flat's mid-century ubiquity was assured when it was adopted by two dancers-turned-actresses: Brigitte Bardot and Audrey Hepburn. The Cendrillon style beloved by Kate Moss was originally made for Ms.

Prima Ballerinas

Four versatile ballet flats with modern flair



Flash Dance A tweed take splashed, unmissably, with radiant sequins. \$900, Chanel, 212-355-5050



Simple Slippers In supple suede, a chocolate wear-'em-with-anything option. \$198, MargauxNY.com



Satin Nostalgia This pair was inspired by Claire McCardell's 1940s designs. \$298, ToryBurch.com



High Kicks Wildly cherry with extended vamps and mega-oomph. \$395, MansurGavriel.com

Bardot, who wore them in "And God Created Woman," the 1956 film that established her as an international sex symbol. The demure Hepburn preferred Capezios, which helped to make them an "it" accessory—especially among adolescents.

Thanks in part to the regard with which Hepburn is remembered and the shoe's French-girl associations, we view the ballet flat today as refined and elegant. But once World War II ended, it was seen as more anti-fashion than high fashion. In 1948, when fashion magazines were promoting slim, slightly tapered high heels, one journalist wrote that women's ongoing penchant for flat shoes was a) causing their feet to get bigger; and b) aesthetically offensive ("gigantic flat feet which shuffle blithely around the streets"). The worst offenders? "Grubby ballet slippers." No wonder teenage girls loved them.

Right now, the shoe trend that's competing with the ballet flat for clicks and dollars is the high-heeled platform. Some things never change.

FASHION WITH A PAST / NANCY MACDONELL



Why the Nimble Ballet Flat Is *En Pointe* Again

CHIEF AMONG the many factors that have fueled ballet slippers' recent ascent to coolness, I'd count: indie sleaze, "Bridgerton," lug-sole fatigue and the pandemic-induced pursuit of comfort. The shoes' appearance in the fall Miu Miu show last month, paired with scrunched-up tube socks and hip-slung tennis skirts, suggests this is a trend with legs.

It was designer Hedi Slimane who first prominently put the ballerina-inspired shoe back onto the runway in his spring 2021 collection for Celine. Meanwhile, indie sleaze Instagram accounts have been documenting the hipster aesthetic of the mid-noughties—think Karen O of

the Yeah Yeah Yeahs—a time now viewed as a more innocent, golden age of style, when party girls like Kate Moss wore Repetto Cendrillon ballet flats. Throw in a collective disenchantment with the lumbering boots and sneakers that have been stomping down the fashion landscape for the past three years and the stage was set for the ballet-flat revival.

Some brands, like Chanel and Margaux, consider classic ballet flats part of their DNA. But a wider range of designers has lately been tinkering with the shoe's dainty proportions. Both Mansur Gavriel and Khaite have given theirs squared-off, pointe-shoe-style toes.

Molly Goddard has affixed skinny ankle ties (and introduced men's sizes). And Simone Rocha has added a slight wedge and criss-crossed straps.

"Comfort leads to confidence and confidence leads to style," said Margaux co-founder Alexa Buckley, explaining the ballet flat's enduring appeal. "After the past couple of years, comfort is really important." Added her partner, Sarah Pierson, "It's the ultimate versatile shoe. It stands the test of time and it works with any style or occasion."

Ballet developed at the 17th-century court of Louis XIV, where dancers wore the era's fashionable garb, in-

cluding corsets and high heels. Almost 100 years later, the ballerina Marie Camargo was the first to trade heels for flats, perhaps the better to perform the dazzling footwork for which she was renowned. When heels fell out of favor after the French Revolution at the end of the 18th century, they were replaced with delicate, thin-soled slippers, a boon for dancers who wanted to appear fashionable while performing. This was the type of shoe worn both on-stage and off during the Regency era—when "Bridgerton" is set—and into the early Victorian era.

The modern ballet flat emerged in the 1940s, when

FAST FIVE

Power to the Pockets

Spring—a season of rejuvenation—is no time to be weighed down by a cumbersome handbag. Haul your must-haves in these stash-friendly dresses, and leave your arms free to swing.



CARRY ON Lively, tea-length spring dresses conveniently equipped with pockets in which to rest your phone, wallet and weary (or fidgety) hands. Hemp Dress, \$450, MaraHoffman.com; Evi Grintela Cotton-Poplin Shirt Dress, \$588, MatchesFashion.com; Cotton-Poplin Dress, \$520, MerletteNYC.com; Cotton-Poplin Dress, \$960, Carolina Herrera, 212-744-2076; Cotton Liberty-Print Dress, \$248, JCrew.com



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ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Go Into Hiding

In these luxe cabins in the Canadian woods, solitude-seeking vacationers can disappear without roughing it



NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T Arcana's mirrored cabins are in the woods of southwestern Ontario, Canada, 12 miles from the nearest town.

By Bert Archer

A NEW OUTFIT called Arcana offers just two cabins, which are designed, the website promises, somewhat eerily, “to return you to the wild as a place, but also the wild as a state of mind.” And where exactly is this wild place? The website pointedly conceals the location, allowing only that it’s about a two-hour drive from Toronto. Once you book your stay, you’re sent a link to a Google map.

Even after I got my link, the red dot representing Arcana—in a forest in southwestern Ontario—didn’t seem to actually be anywhere; it was more between places, down a drive that was off an unnamed road off another unnamed road. When you get to the dot, it is indeed a sort of non-place, free of signs, the gravel drive almost entirely consumed by the ferns, tall grasses and low-hang-

ing conifers that almost made me miss the low-slung wooden gate.

I’d also been texted a little map of the property, and once I parked in a clearing, I followed it farther into the woods and down another path to my cabin. I congratulated myself on having actually found it: The structure’s mirror steel exterior was doing all it could to disappear into its reflection of the surrounding woodland.

Though I was assured there would be staff on site, I only caught a glimpse of someone late on my second day. The idea behind this new property is that you’re meant to be absolutely alone. When I first entered my cabin (using an access code also texted in advance), I found a sleek, snug space that felt a bit like a tricked-out shipping container, with a window wall framing a rectangle of forest. A handwritten welcome note instructed me to turn on the Sonos, put on the supplied



eye mask, lie down and embark on a 45-minute “sound journey.” Skeptically, I complied. For the next 45 minutes, a placid voice led me through a surprisingly restorative meditation. Once it finished, I stepped out onto the deck with its two lounge chairs and barbecue-cum-fire pit. Twilight crept over my

little patch. Everything was still.

You can bring your own food and drinks—the cabin comes equipped with a fridge and a Bosch oven. The cupboards even harbor fancy snacks (for sale). But I had chosen the \$100 prepared meal plan—two dinners, two breakfasts and lunches for one from Bruce Wine Bar in a nearby vil-

lage, all waiting for me in the fridge. With the meal fee plus the \$830 room rate (from \$415 a day with a two-night minimum), a couple could easily spend \$1,000 for the stay. Given my outlay, I couldn’t help thinking that my cabin should have come with a wet bar and a hot tub too. But the luxury amenities were more modest, including Artemide lamps and a Porlex coffee grinder.

The activities on offer were just as modest. Just outside the cabin, I noticed four marked trails. The one I chose to follow my first morning led me about a half-mile through tall deciduous trees, to arrive at a misty pond. You can book a tea pavilion,

And where exactly is this mysterious wild place? The website pointedly conceals the exact location.

set near the cabin, on the scheduling app Calendly to ensure you don’t run into other guests. It’s got a fireplace, a turntable with some unusual records by folks like Nils Frahm and Balmorhea, and some loose chaga tea to steep and sip in the low light while you sink into soft-brown velvet corduroy chairs.

A bit further out into the woods, you’ll find a sauna and plunge pool, also bookable on Calendly. Like the cabin, the sauna immerses you in Canada’s nature through floor-to-ceiling windows. The plunge pool was a bracing 42 degrees.

I spent two days at Arcana, doing little more than walking around and listening to the rain and the wind in the leaves. I wouldn’t say I ever entered a wild state of mind, but I certainly felt delightfully disconnected from my everyday life.

Co-founder Amanda Kwok later told me that the company is scouting locations that will house 30-plus cabins elsewhere in Canada and in rural New York. I suppose scaling up makes good business sense, but I couldn’t help thinking that a place whose key selling point is privacy and solitude might lose its appeal once it accommodates up to 60 guests at a time.

My cabin came with a booklet offering instructions for meditating on the night sky and winding down before bed. I never needed it. Alone in my mirrored hideout in the woods, I slept like a log.



STUCCO AROUND Minard’s Spaghetti Inn opened in Clarksburg, W.Va. in the 1930s.

TIME CAPSULE

Red Sauce Royalty

Of all the throwback Italian-American restaurants in West Virginia, Minard’s Spaghetti Inn is among the oldest, homiest and most intact

THEN

WHEN MICHAEL AND ROSE Minard treated their first customers to spaghetti and hand-rolled meatballs, it was in their humble stucco home’s dining room, in Clarksburg, W.Va., modestly furnished with an old oak table and about six chairs. By the 1930s, an Italian-American community flourished in north-central West Virginia, but the Great Depression lingered and industrial jobs that sustained immigrant families at the turn of the century had largely dried up. The Minards had little but culinary know-how, passed down from Calabrian ancestors and that stucco building in which Minard’s Spaghetti Inn was born in 1937. The next year, Michael’s brother Sam Minard and his wife Agnes (Rose’s sister) joined the effort. They worked side-by-side in a tiny kitchen to churn out sauce-drenched noodles, ladle by ladle, night after night. Days after visiting for pasta or beef cacciatore, guests often received a handwritten note of thanks in the mail. Eventually the entire first floor became restaurant space. Expansions continued about once per decade through the ‘90s.

NOW

IN OVER EIGHT DECADES, the rich, meaty sauce recipe hasn’t changed. Cooks just make more of it—around 1,200 gallons a week, along with 20 gallons of vinegary house salad dressing and over 3,000 meatballs. “And that’s on a slow week,” said general manager Heather Gillespie. Spaghetti, lasagna and handmade ravioli turn first-time diners into devotees, but so does the atmosphere. Countless little touches—from family photographs and afghan-draped sofas to vintage wallpapers and old-fangled curios—paint a picture easily interpreted, wistfully by many, as home. “It’s the same homey feeling, the same thing they got when they were kids,” said Ms. Gillespie. Four large, unlabeled portraits hang in gilded frames just inside the front door. Original proprietors Michael and Rose are on one side, directly facing Sam and Agnes (see inset) on the other, greeting everyone who comes and goes. Each wears a slight grin; it’s as if they collectively echo a line from their letters 85 years ago: “Thank you for coming to our house for dinner.” —Mike Costello



Spaghetti Strongholds

Three other red-sauce relics in West Virginia

MOM'S LASAGNA | Twin Oaks Restaurant, Bridgeport, W.Va. Knotty pine walls and oak-leaf metal fixtures hark back to 1957 when the lalepi brothers first opened Twin Oaks as a pizza and hoagie shop. Before long, the restaurant expanded and the brothers leaned into their southern-Italian culinary heritage to build out a robust menu with additional entrees like homemade ravioli with meat sauce, chicken and

veal parm and Mom lalepi’s lasagna.

RIGATONI ON THE RIVER | Muriale’s Italian Kitchen, Fairmont, W.Va. When Frank and Violet Muriale opened their restaurant overlooking the Monongahela River in 1969, they did so inspired by their deep Calabrian roots—and with assistance from siblings, grandparents and cousins. The proud family legacy is still on display at Muriale’s

Italian Kitchen, in old photographs, letters and mementos that line the walls, and in the time-honored family recipes—though these days, you can order their “famous meatballs” with whole-wheat or gluten-free pasta.



Muriale’s Italian Kitchen

TRAIN FARE | Julio’s Cafe, Clarksburg, W.Va. The surroundings of Julio’s Cafe (est. 1967) have changed over three generations of laquinta family ownership. At first, Julio’s largely catered to the once-bustling train depot in Clarksburg’s Glen Elk District. Passenger trains no longer stop at the depot and Glen Elk is quieter now. But in the same brick building with vintage neon signage, Julio’s offers up a host of family recipes, many of which predate the laquintas’ journey from San Giovanni in Fiore.

THE MEATBALL INDEX / PASTA COSTS, PAST AND PRESENT

THE FIRST plate of spaghetti and meatballs went for half a dollar at the Minards’ residence-turned-restaurant in 1937. Ingredient costs spiked during the pandemic, straining already tight operating budgets of independent restaurants, and leading Minard’s to raise prices across the board. The cost



193750 cents
1963\$1.20
1974\$2.50
1995\$6.25
2022\$12

of some ingredients quadrupled, and that of some dishes rose accordingly.

Regular spaghetti with two meatballs increased by a mere 25 cents. “I’ll put my foot down on that one, no matter what happens,” said general manager Heather Gillespie. “Sure, we might have to raise it here and there, but we cannot get outrageous with the price of our spaghetti.”

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

Tuscany's islands are a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, especially those who are fond of carbo-loading

By ALEX ULAM

ACCORDING TO myth, the seven islands forming the Tuscan Archipelago came from pearls that the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite, lost in the Tyrrhenian Sea during a visit. Later, the archipelago's dramatic views as well as its proximity to Rome, about 200 miles away, made it a popular place for plutocrats to vacation. You can find ruins of the grand seaside villas and gardens they built throughout the islands.

The archipelago remains a delight. And unlike the storied attractions at Italy's better known destinations that regularly endure tourist stampedes, many of the natural and historic wonders here are preserved, often with restricted access, in the Tuscan Archipelago National Park, one of Europe's largest marine parks. Due to the archipelago's distinctive ecosystems, which include endemic flora and fauna, the entire area has been designated a Unesco Biosphere Reserve, and recreational activity is controlled in many areas. But as I discovered during my visit last summer, there is still plenty of space for adventure.

The largest island, Elba, is reachable by ferry from the port town of Piombino on the mainland. It's famous mostly as the place where Napoleon Bonaparte spent 10 months in exile before escaping during a masquerade carnival party. His presence is amply documented with many plaques and a museum that was established in the modest house where he lived adjacent to one of the Mediterranean's largest remaining Renaissance-era fortresses.

In recent years Elba has also become renowned as a destination for outdoor sports enthusiasts of all types. Over the course of my visit, I saw a parade of vintage Fiat convertibles touring the island and a rally of muscle cars rumbling up and down the mountains. I also watched the 2021 Mountain Bike Marathon World Championship at the Capoliveri Bike Park, one of the most celebrated courses in Europe. Also in attendance: fan clubs of intense-looking



CLARE ROLLET (MAP); ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (BEACH); CYCLIST

A Marine Park with a Piazza

UNDER THE TUSCAN SEA Clockwise from above: Elba is the largest island in the Tuscan archipelago; abandoned iron ore mines on Elba's Calamite peninsula; stuffed mussels and egg at Ristorante Da Cipolla in the cliff-side town of Rio nell'Elba.



tours of Roman-era catacomb complexes as well as a ghost town at a port presided over by a battlemented fortress.

I joined the guided mountain bike tour, which went past various abandoned prison buildings from different eras, including one that once held notorious Mafia barons and Red Brigade terrorists. I inhaled the intoxicating musky smell of Mediterranean macchia and tried to keep my bike from bouncing off a rutted rocky coastal trail. My guide indicated a fecund shoreline below blanketed with dry shrubs and long crinkly gray sea grass, which he

two walk from a locally caught seafood and pasta dinner at a beachside restaurant or a town with a piazza where I could sip cappuccino and watch passersby.

I stayed with a Venetian-born friend, Manfred, who in part to escape Venice's increasing influx of tourists had recently moved to Rio nell'Elba, a small historically significant cliff-side town where boutiques haven't yet taken root. There was, however, a small archaeological museum where I learned that the ferrous rocks I'd seen during my excursions had been a critical source for the iron used in the manufacture of both armaments for ancient Roman armies and modern Italian ones.

One of the most popular and challenging hiking trails leads to Castle Volterraio, which was built during the Middle Ages, and later enlarged by the Pisans, and proved impregnable against relentless Saracen slavery raids and against the various Western European powers constantly battling to control the strategic archipelago. From its perch on a precipitous crumbly escarpment, the castle offers some of the best views of the island, but if I visit again, I will stay on the trail. I almost ended up on my hands and knees with vertigo after following a game, older Swiss couple through a shortcut.

After a day of arduous biking or hiking, followed by a refreshing swim in the sea, I often ended up at Ristorante Da Cipolla di Carletti Davide, the only restaurant fronting onto Rio nell'Elba's lively piazza, where my favorite meal was pasta with wild boar washed down with a decent red wine. From the piazza, I had views across farmland to a sparkling bay far below and of the sunset deepening the green hues of forested mountains above. Views like this likely inspired ancient Romans on holiday, and hopefully, thanks to the Archipelago's environmental regulations, these islands will remain just as enticing for future generations of spandex-wearing cyclists.



I spent most of my time on Elba, where I snorkeled above pulsating beds of algae teaming with schools of fish.

Italians who were attired in color-coordinated spandex cycling uniforms, accessorized with expensive bikes.

The smallest island, Montecristo, the setting for novelist Alexandre Dumas's masterpiece, is off-limits to recreational visitors, but, from various vantage points throughout Elba, its ethereal crag rising from the sea makes for a memorable sight. Then there are the former longtime penal colony islands, most notably Pianosa, known as the Italian Alcatraz. The prison closed several decades ago and now there's a small hotel and restaurant on the island. Though only about 340 people are allowed on Pianosa a day, you'll find a host of chaperoned activities including

said had suffered little human interference since the mid-19th century.

I spent most of my time on Elba, where I snorkeled above pulsating beds of algae teaming with schools of fish that were almost as translucent as the water. I also spent hours hiking without encountering more than a handful of other trekkers along vertiginous ridgelines where I could look far down forested slopes and see the sea on both sides of me.

I discovered empty beaches hidden in coves only accessible by boat or by strenuous hiking that were walled off by steep promontories of different types of stones.

No matter how far away I seemed to be at times, I was never more than an hour or




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GEAR & GADGETS

Let's Keep It Simple

Continued from page D1

tion merely to function properly. "I've gotten so many emails from readers who are looking for a 'dumb TV,'" said Mr. Hoffman. "Unfortunately, that doesn't exist."

While a TV that can't access Netflix in the age of cord-cutting isn't very useful, the trend has taken hold outside the living room too. Increasingly, said Jerry Beilinson, technology editor at Consumer Reports, "you can't buy a high-end washing machine or dishwasher or dryer without it having Wi-Fi connectivity."

When it comes to smart appliances beyond TVs, the benefits are less obvious. While it is convenient to zap your popcorn without pressing any of a microwave's buttons, either via a phone app or through a voice assistant, when every device is, on some level, a computer, there are downsides. We've all heard stories about some household object that, a la Mr. Hoffman's confoundingly sophisticated scale, stops working because the "smart" technology inside it breaks. Mr. Hoffman says he's encountered washing machines that won't let you clean your clothes until you've downloaded and installed a firmware update. "It is just annoying," he said.

The problems aren't always due to glitches or necessary security updates. Sometimes companies disable features intentionally. Mr. Beilinson said data collection offers a simple way for companies to make devices more profitable: "Adding Wi-Fi connectivity to appliances is extremely cheap and the data companies get out of it is extremely valuable." Requiring that people connect to Wi-Fi in order to use features means more

Some brands are bucking the trend with untethered devices.

will connect. The brands are nudging, or arguably forcing, you to accept the intrusion.

For example, GE has engineered some of its ovens so that you can't use the convection roast feature unless you connect them to Wi-Fi and download an app to your phone. This despite the fact that many residential ovens have had convection features since 1945, when the Wi-Fi in most homes was, shall we say, spotty. (A GE spokesperson said the company makes plenty of appliances that do not require Wi-Fi connectivity, but also wants to give customers the option of increased technological capability.)

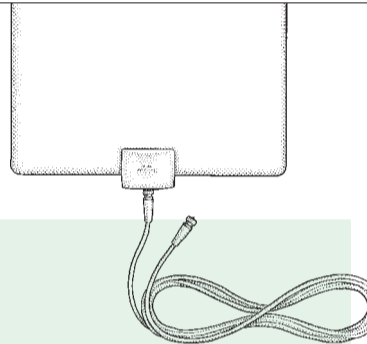
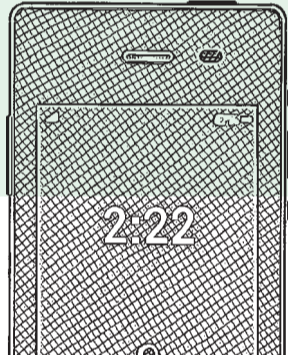
The story is the same in the living room. Roku, for example, might be best known for its streaming sticks and smart televisions, but the company actually earns most of its money from the streaming platform it designed. According to its 2021 earnings report, the company actually lost \$52 million from sales of hardware. The model works because of how effectively the company has been able to monetize its platform through licensing and advertising. Roku identified "targeting using first-party data" as its fastest-growing ad product last year, by which it means leveraging the information it gets from tracking your viewing habits to serve you new shows to watch or products you can buy directly from your TV. (Roku declined to comment for this article.)

Sometimes, it is still possible to opt out of this kind of tracking. Mr. Beilinson owns a garage door



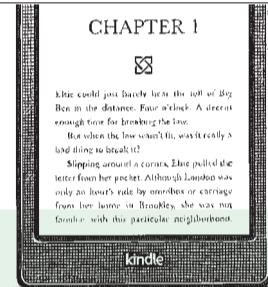
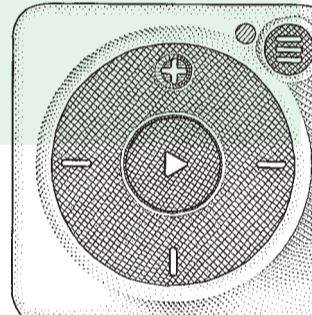
The Best Dumb Tech | Eight pieces of gear that make the case for a future of less-connected devices

Light Phone II It lets you make calls and send texts, but not much else. It's designed to be used as little as possible, though you can add optional "Tools" like GPS navigation and podcasts.



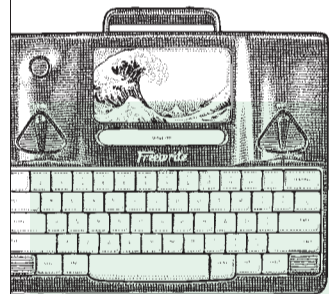
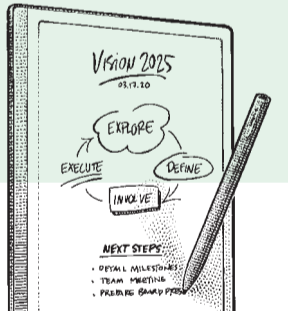
The Mohu Leaf Plus Amplified TV Antenna Free broadcast TV still exists, and it has been in HD for over a decade now. Cheap, powerful indoor antennas like this one allow you to rediscover the experience.

Mighty Like the iPod Shuffle for the streaming age, this device lets you sync songs over from Spotify or Amazon Music to listen offline. It's great for working out, when picking the perfect playlist can easily become an excuse to dawdle near a squat rack.



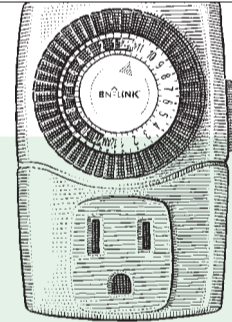
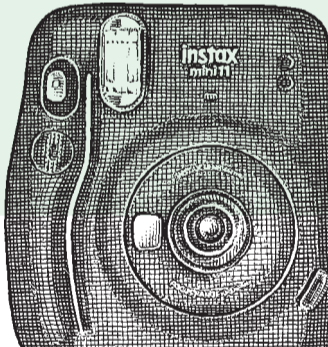
Kindle Paperwhite Thanks to a crisp, responsive screen and light body, the Kindle is a superior e-reader. Cheaper Kindles like the Paperwhite include some bloat like ads and a web browser. Both are easy to ignore, especially since the browser is harder to use than "Ulysses" is to read.

reMarkable 2 As close as you can get to a digital pad of paper. This thin tablet comes with a realistic-feeling pen, which you can use to mark up documents and sync notes to your phone or computer.



Freewrite This digital typewriter—nothing more than a mechanical keyboard with an e-ink screen—lets you draft without distraction. To edit, you can send text to your computer.

The Fujifilm Instax 11 An instant camera like the Polaroids of old, it prints an actual physical photo that you can share with a friend by handing it to them. What a concept.



BN-LINK Mini 24-hour Mechanical Outlet Timer Decades after the servers for smart plugs currently on the market shut down, this little mechanical timer will keep on ticking—and you can get two for 12 bucks.

opener that could be controlled with an app, but he hasn't connected the device to Wi-Fi. "I don't feel like I need to tell a company every time I open the garage door."

But more often than not, avoiding the downsides of smart tech requires awkward, costly workarounds. Mr. Hoffman said some people avoid connecting their TVs to Wi-Fi to ensure their viewing habits cannot be tracked. But then they must purchase an extra device to watch their top shows. "People who are really into privacy prefer the Apple TV box," he said, pointing out that Apple considers its customer's privacy a high priority. Others might

rightfully bristle at the idea of spending an extra \$180 to ensure a new TV doesn't track their behavior.

Deciding which devices you want to connect to the internet is a balancing act. But some signs suggest that people are seeking actively unconnected "dumb" devices. For example, in an earnings report last year, Fujifilm, the Japanese camera company, said it has made more money in each of the last five years from its line of Instax instant film cameras and accessories than it has from selling digital cameras and their lenses.

The analog trend is also manifesting in gaming. Wizards of The Coast,

which makes the dice-rolling, pen-and-paper-based Dungeons & Dragons series and the card game Magic: The Gathering, saw a revenue increase of 24%, up to \$816 billion, from 2019 to 2020. Even when Pandemic-induced lockdowns made in-person gaming impossible, many chose to invest in games that they could play in person, once restrictions were lifted. "There is a subset of people who are looking for ways to reduce the role of technology in their lives, to not always be so connected," said Mr. Beilinson, "people looking for physical experiences."

Startups are emerging specifically to cater to such people. One is reMarkable, which makes tablets for writing that might look, at first glance, like an iPad. The difference: no extra apps and a black-and-white e-ink screen. It is as close as you can get to a digital piece of paper, which is exactly the point. "When you're writing and thinking your best thoughts, it is really important that you don't get an email or a notification that takes you out of that," said Henrik Gustav Faller, vice president of communication at reMarkable. "That stream of thought is something that we really try to focus on and really cherish."

The 300-person reMarkable team, based in Norway, spent years developing the tablet before launch—reducing the latency on the screen and contemplating how much the pen should weigh. The end product has a few smart features—one gives users access to files on Dropbox and Google Drive—but not many. It appears the approach is working: As of

2020, reMarkable has sold over half a million devices. A company representative said sales increased in 2021, but they declined to release specific numbers.

The Light Phone II is a tiny brick with a similar black-and-white e-ink screen—and a similar philosophy. Designed by a 13 person team in New York City, it supports calls and texts, but no social media. Kaiwei Tang, co-founder and CEO, said that is because he believes our phones currently do way too much. That's why there is no Light Phone app store; you can, however, download a few "tools" that let you do simple things like get directions or listen to podcasts. The phone, which launched in 2019, saw a 150% increase in sales from release to 2021 according to Mr. Tang. Investors include Twitter co-founder Biz Stone and Adobe chief product officer Scott Belsky.

These kinds of devices are made by and for people who are contemplating their relationship with technology and intentionally opting for simpler, less distracting devices. They offer a reminder that we should be able to choose how we interact with our technology, and how it interacts with us.

Everyone has a different threshold for what is and isn't useful—and some smart devices might do enough to make the odd annoyance worth bearing. But since no company will make this calculation for you, Mr. Hoffman said it's important to consider what you actually want: "Even if you love smart technology, not everything needs to be smart."

Even a Skeptic Can Appreciate Some Smart Tech. Three Winners...



Adaptive Central Air

The **Google Nest Learning Thermostat** can, by some estimates, reduce your heating and cooling bills by 10 to 15% by not using energy when it's not needed. If you're going to introduce smart tech to your house, it might as well be saving you money (and reducing your carbon footprint).



Secure Streaming

Apple TV is one of the few visual entertainment platforms that doesn't track and monetize your viewing habits, according to privacy experts. Plus, these boxes will continue getting security updates much longer than your run-of-the-mill smart television.



Flexible Fixtures

The **Wyze Bulb Color** is an affordable LED smart bulb that can make any lamp or sconce colorful. Customize the color or intensity with your phone at any moment or schedule the bulbs to turn off and on at specific times then forget about them completely.



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GEAR & GADGETS



SADDLE UP The Tundra features leather upholstery, lots of chrome plus other upgrades to rival its urban-cowboy competitors.

RUMBLE SEAT / DAN NEIL



A Heavy-Duty Toyota, Made Deep in the Heart of Texas

I HAD ABOUT a ton of debris in my yard—broken concrete, rotting landscape timbers, scrap metal—and an immaculate 2022 Toyota Tundra 1794 Edition CrewMax 4x4. I had misgivings about putting them together.

Toyota's redesigned-for-2022 pickup arrived wearing some of the fanciest duds in the company chifforobe: the 1794 Edition is a luxury trim package in honor of Texas self-love, featuring saddle-like upholstery, weathered wood trim, and lots of chrome—on bumpers, door handles and mirrors, window surrounds, lower door guards and that rodeo champion belt-buckle of a grille.

And again I found myself facing the first-scratch dilemma, the paradox of having a hugely capable pickup that's too nice to do anything with. Could I bring myself to huck that evil stuff into that pristine cargo box?

Yes, with some anguish. But here I discovered one of the best new features: the Tundra's aluminum reinforced, sheet-molded compound cargo box. This high-impact composite makes the cargo box pretty well impervious to routine gouging, denting, scratching and scuffing. I like it. Nice shooting, Tex.

Built in San Antonio, the new Tundra represents a third-generation reboot of Toyota's traditional pickup. The overhaul is full of keen details: No more V8 engines but a

2022 TOYOTA TUNDRA 1794 EDITION CREWMAX 4X4 I-FORCE



Base price \$61,020
Price, as tested \$66,240
Powertrain Twin-turbocharged and intercooled direct- and port-injected 3.5-liter DOHC V6 engine with variable valve timing; 10-speed automatic transmission with Tow/Haul modes; two-speed transfer case for automatic and on-demand 4WD; limited-slip rear differential.
Power/torque 389 hp at 5,200 rpm/479 lb-ft at 2,400 rpm
Length/wheelbase/width/height 245.6/157.7/80.2/78.0 inches
Curb weight 5,720 pounds
Towing/payload capacity 10,890/1,575 pounds
Gross combined-weight tow rating 17,250 pounds
EPA fuel economy 17/23/19 mpg, city/highway/combined

choice of twin-turbo 3.5-liter V6s, paired with a 10-speed transmission and rear-wheel drive or optional four-wheel drive. The non-hybrid V6 (SR5 package, 2WD) can tow up to 12,000 pounds or haul 1,940 pounds.

The Tundra also catches up to its urban-cowboy competitors with a more civilized multi-link independent rear suspension. With the trailering upgrade, the rear coil springs are swapped with air springs. Now you're talking. The air

suspension allows drivers to line up and then lower the trailer ball beneath the level of the trailer hitch, guided by feeds from a rear-facing camera and other sensors. Trailering newbies will be spared hours of embarrassment at the marina.

However, if you were hoping for Prius-like fuel economy from the hybridized Tundra, yeah, no. The non-hybrid 4x4 is rated at 19 mpg, combined; the hybrid version gets a whopping 2 mpg more (21 mpg). Virtually all of the hybrid over-

head is devoted to more power and torque (48 hp/104 lb-ft.)

Can you live without? Insert personal cost/benefit analysis here.

The standard twin-turbo V6 in our test vehicle presented well—strong, polished, easy to drive, eager to be driven. The 10-speed transmission is a bit shift-happy but that's not a surprise. With its more refined chassis bits, the Tundra's roadholding is also good—albeit better with a few hundred pounds of crapola in the bed. The cabin's UX is fresh and friendly, with a big central touch screen and an array of oversize rotary controls providing first-level functions for climate and audio, so users don't have to take off their gloves.

But my sense-memories of the Tundra are dominated by its worrying dimensions and general geometric effrontery. At 78.0 inches high and 80.2 inches wide (not counting mirrors) the Tundra forms a nearly perfect cube when seen head-on. All lit up at night, it looks like a Borg ship has you in its tractor beam.

Moreover, mirrors count. Our tester had the optional extending and folding trailering mirrors. With the mirrors in neutral position the Tundra measures 102.1 inches between the ears. Yikes.

One of the systems intended to help Tundra drivers stay in their lane—the Lane Tracing Assist—graphically illustrates the chal-

lenge of doing so, in the head-up display. This system uses cameras to follow the road and, should the driver get close to the lane markings, will send a warning through the HUD (the lane markings on either side of the little animated Tundra will flash). If the driver takes no action the system will gently and automatically nudge the vehicle toward the center.

Built in San Antonio, the new Tundra represents a third-generation reboot of Toyota's traditional pickup.

I have excellent lane discipline, thank you, but I could not avoid these virtual warning tracks. Keeping this thing dead-center on a twisting road takes the concentration of a Zen archer.

Here is where things get weird: This large truck has gotten smaller in some key dimensions. The cargo box walls are lower (20.9 vs. 22.2 inches) and the bed floor is narrower between the wheel wells (48.7 vs. 50.0 inches). For some reason—perhaps having to do with platform commonality with other new Toyota products—the CrewMax cabin provides a little less leg and shoulder room, front and rear.

Yet in one way the new Tundra drives bigger than ever: The turning diameter. With the same wheelbase as the 2021 model, the double-cab long-bed versions need 52 feet to pull a 180-degree turn, 3 more than the 2021. This is curious, since the biggest constraint to a vehicle's steering angle, the hard point, is typically the size of the engine between the front wheels. With a smaller engine, why can't the Tundra turn tighter? See above, re: platform commonality.

On my way back from the landfill, I stopped at my local big-box for a load of pressure-treated 4x6x16s and bags of concrete. Unlike past Tundras, our CrewMax tester was mated with a 6.5-foot long bed. But because the overall bed length, with tailgate down, is barely half the beams' 16-foot length, they wanted to tip out. Fiddle-dee-dee, I said (not exactly). All this truck and I still needed a bigger one.

I used the bags of concrete to hold the beams down. In doing so I discovered another misstep—or missing step. The rear bumper has no foothold, no place to step up into the cargo bed. Fancy models like ours, with optional auto-deploying/retracting side steps, get a powered step to help people get into the cargo bed. But without the powered accessories, users will have to hop onto the tailgate or climb up on the rear tire, which is hard to do in skintight Wranglers and ostrich-leather Tony Lamas. Texans could rip their britches.

MORE CLIMBING GYMS opened in 2021 than in any previous year, according to the industry publication Climbing Business Journal—and as the pursuit gains a stronger foothold, more novices than ever are walking through gym doors ready to scale seemingly sheer walls. You'll have a surprisingly rough time making your way up in Nikes, however.

People mistake climbing as an upper-body sport, said Emily Harrington, a five-time national sport climbing champion and athlete for the North Face. "Think of it more like gymnastics: There's a lot of balance, coordination, body awareness and creativity required," she said.

If you want to get serious, you need proper climbing shoes. Their essential traits: stiff toe caps like those on ballet pointe shoes, sticky soles that grip textured climbing holds and enough rigidity to give your foot a bit of extra power and support. The design is effective, but the first time you try to jam your wide, sockless feet into a pointy rubber shoe—for many, an extremely uncomfortable experience—you might not appreciate it. And like running sneakers, climbing shoes are often expensive.

Luckily, most gyms have plenty available for rent. But if you really want to send a route—i.e., successfully climb it from start to finish without falling—you'll eventually want to shed these rental versions designed to accommodate countless different feet for a pair that will mold to your unique soles.

It only took Boris Shirman, a director of photography in Brooklyn who started climbing in 2019, a few ses-

Why Do Climbing Shoes Look So Weird?

A guide to the strange sneakers you'll need to become a serious scaler



HIGH DESIGN The unique shape and construction of climbing shoes help you get up the wall more efficiently.

sions shod in gym rentals to decide he was ready for an upgrade. Once he did, "I got a better sense of how much I could trust my toes, how well the shoe would stick to the wall, and how well it could support me," the 24-year old said. "That feeling has only increased since I upgraded to more aggressive shoes."

For your first pair, look for a shoe with a neutral profile that lets your feet comfortably lie flat and a thick rubber platform to keep them from tiring too quickly, said Michael Genauer, product line manager for outdoor-footwear brand La Sportiva. While Velcro enclosures let you adjust the fit at two or three points on the

foot, laces can be cinched all the way down to the toe for a closer fit. "The idea is that you're trying to transfer power from your foot to the shoe to the wall, so you want a tight fit," said Mr. Genauer. The heel should be snug, and your toes should be touching the tip of the shoe but not scrunched. More ambitious scalers will find

shoes that are bent at the toe allow for more precise footwork.

New climbers, though, should prioritize relative comfort. "If your goal is to just learn how to climb, feet that hurt will be a major obstacle to that," said Lizzy Redlich, head instructor at the Cliffs at LIC in Queens, NY. "The best shoe for you is the one that feels good and makes you excited to climb."

1. For First Ascenders

Designed to offer beginners a higher degree of comfort, the La Sportiva Tarantula features a rounded forefoot and a toe box slightly wider than that of normal sneakers to give toes more wiggle room. Velcro enclosures make the shoe easy to get on and off between climbs as your feet adjust to the fit. \$95, Sportiva.com

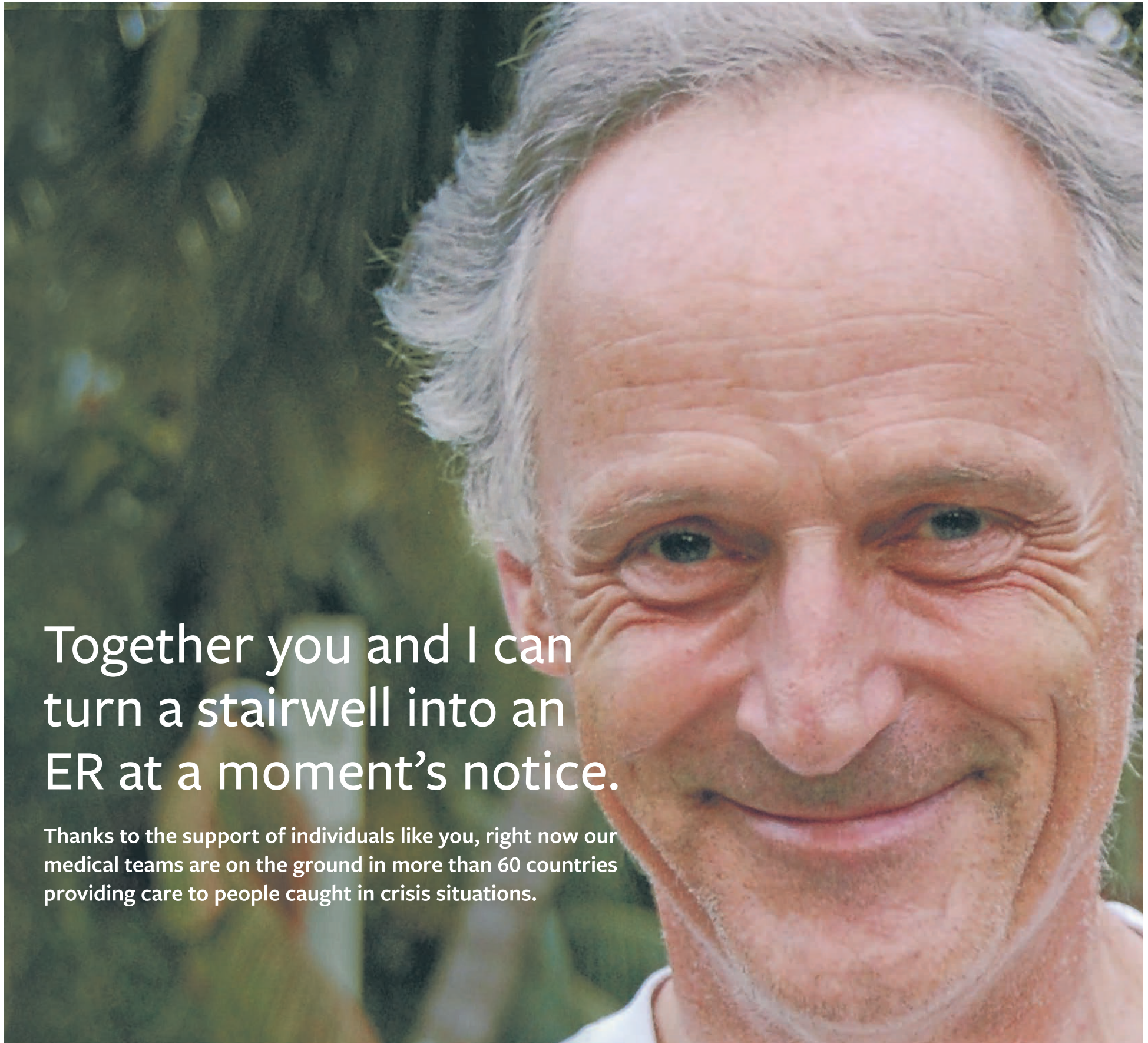
2. For Regular Rock Jocks

The slightly downturned toe on Black Diamond Equipment's Aspect puts feet in a stronger position from which to push off the wall. Stiff enough to support you on smaller footholds, they're still sufficiently comfortable to let you walk around between climbs. \$160, BlackDiamondEquipment.com

3. For Confident Climbers

The Evolv Shaman shoe aggressively curves toward the big toe to give you more power during advanced moves. While navigating overhangs, for example, you can use it like a hook. The relative width of the rubber throughout the shoe is calibrated to reduce pressure and increase durability. \$170, EvolvSports.com

—Ashley Mateo



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DESIGN & DECORATING



CHRISTIAN CONVERTS
Pysanky began as a pagan rite of spring, then evolved into Easter décor. Here, eggs donated to Pysanky for Peace.

tility. So powerful was the ritual of creating pysanky that Stalin outlawed it in the 1940s. Not until 1991, when Ukraine gained independence, could the decorated eggs be made again. National

So powerful was the ritual of creating pysanky that Stalin outlawed it in the 1940s.

pride swelled and the Pysanka Museum in Kolomyia was born. Its egg-shaped gift shop (some 45-foot-high) was declared a landmark in 2007.

Now there is a resurgence. “I can’t keep up with demand,” said Ms. Kulish, who has asked fellow makers (or *pysankarka*) to send pysanky for her fundraising sales. (To date, she has helped raise some \$25,000 for Ukraine through local events.) To augment workshops organized by Ukrainian museums and churches, artists are offering private and virtual classes. “This is the most I’ve ever taught—my classes have sold out,” said Wendy Hallstrom of Clinton, N.J.

With this revival comes hope. In Ukrainian legend, evil is a monster chained to the mountainside whose chains tighten when pysanky are written. As Tamara Fedorenko—a fifth-generation Kyivite who is still running her Etsy store, Pysanka Shop—will tell you, “Life-affirming images are necessary now.” A practice she recently adopted drives home the point. “I started writing the date and ‘Kyiv’ on my eggs, because if I die tomorrow, it will be a chronology of my art,” she wrote via email. “My pysanky are part of the history of this war. And this is my personal front.” (Her box supplier in Zaporizhzhia was bombed; the fate of the Mariupol farmer who provided her goose eggs is unknown.)

Ms. Fedorenko’s fortitude resonates with Sarah Bachinger, a Round Lake, N.Y., artist who founded the fundraising effort Pysanky for Peace. “There’s something a bit defiant about pysanky—but in a positive way,” she said.

LOVE STORY

My Hunt for Easter Eggs

How one writer brought new meaning to her holiday and found a symbol of Ukraine’s resilience in the nation’s intricately patterned eggshells, called pysanky, a centuries-old tradition

By MAILE PINGEL

EVERY YEAR I put up an Easter tree. It’s a humble thing, just a few branches gathered on dog walks and adorned with pastel papier-mâché eggs my mother gave me. But this year, as my garden in Los Angeles frothed

daffodils and peach blossoms, Russian troops invaded Ukraine. I recalled that on a 2005 trip to Eastern Europe I had seen pysanky, the traditional, artful eggs of Ukraine, and I thought that if I could find a few online, they might serve as timely, resonant objects to hang on my tree.

An Etsy search for “Ukrainian eggs” revealed countless

other people had hit on the same idea. Pysanky were selling out, so I quickly placed an order. Too quickly, perhaps. As I researched I learned that what I’d bought weren’t Ukrainian pysanky but rather eggs in a similar (albeit prettily painted) folkloric style. Down the rabbit hole I went. And what a joyful—and poignant—journey it has been.

True Ukrainian pysanky are not painted but dyed with a wax-resist process. Using a stylus called a *kistka* to deliver an ink-like flow of melted beeswax, artists—traditionally women—“write” the design onto the egg. (The term *pysanky*, plural for *pysanka*, comes from the verb *pysaty*, which means “to write.”) The initial wax lines resist the first dye and remain white. As more wax designs are added, the egg is dyed with successively darker dyes. Many colors, or just a few, can be used. (Historically, families handed down plant-based dye recipes.)

The wax is then melted away, revealing myriad patterns: wheat, fire, animals, the tree of life. Some are purely geometric, almost Op Art in style. Others have an Art Nouveau or Japanese-woodblock look. “All of the symbols are good wishes,” said Andrea Kulish, an artist in Asheville, N.C., and a first-generation Ukrainian-Ameri-

can whose mother taught her the method. “Each egg is a connection to my family and a link to Ukraine.”

Pysanky began as pagan folk art celebrating spring. When Christianity made inroads in Ukraine in the 10th century, attempts to squelch the craft failed, so symbolism was reassigned: A ladder to thatch the roof became a ladder to heaven, fish representing water gods became symbolic of Christ, the fisher of men, and so on. “They became Easter eggs,” said Lisa McDonald, a schoolteacher and pysanky instructor in Cody, Wyo. “Whether pagan or Christian, they’re about rebirth.” For artist Jennifer Santa Maria in Farmingdale, N.J., they are also about magic. “You’re bestowing meaning into an object; if you’re practicing prayer or song while doing it, your work has that potency,” she said, adding that eggs were buried in fields or tucked into coops to encourage fer-

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Above: A participant at the Pysanky for Peace workshop, in Round Lake, N.Y., uses a tool called a *kistka*, which delivers a fine line of melted wax that resists dye. Below: The geometric and Op Art patterns of Jennifer Santa Maria, an artist in Farmingdale, N.J., represent a less-folksy aesthetic.

Pysanky Very Much

Where to buy exquisitely decorated shells

Pysanky by Basia

In Bucks County, Penn., Basia Andrusko’s traditional methods include the drop-pull technique (a pin is used to pull a drop of wax and create a tail) from Ukraine’s Lemko region. *From \$25, PysankyByBasia.com*

Shannon Wallis Designs

Shannon Wallis, in Norwich, Vt., “writes” traditional Ukrainian symbols,

as well as other cultures’ motifs, including Celtic knots and henna-inspired flowers. *From \$25, ShannonWallisDesigns.com*

Sofika

The pysanky by New York City ethnographer Sofika Zielyk show in museum collections around the world and are currently at Manhattan’s Ukrainian Institute of America. *From \$35, Sofika.com*

DandyLion Eggs

From her Seattle-area studio, Sarah Armstrong sometimes modifies traditional motifs to develop contemporary patterns. *From \$22, DandyLionEggs.com*

Pysanka by Adriana

The website of Adri-

ana Wrzesniewski often sells out, but her eggs can be found at festivals across Southern California. As well as colorful pysanky, she makes sophisticated black-and-white versions. *From \$40, Pysanka.com*



EATING & DRINKING

Have a Bulb

Fennel adapts elegantly to spring's vagaries, whether in a crisp salad or a cozy braise

By CATHY WHIMS

THIS time of year, the weather really messes with my psyche. A warm day comes along and I cheer right up. Then sun turns to sleet, and I just don't know what season it is—or what I want to eat.

Fortunately, there is fennel. Depending how you prepare it, this aromatic bulb can be fresh and crisp, a welcome break from the heavy flavors of winter, or it can be sweet and tender, as comforting as that cardigan you're not quite ready to relinquish.



In an Alfredo pasta, the flavor of fennel combines with leeks to elevate the classic cream sauce.

Fennel is essential to Italian cuisine, one reason I welcome it into the kitchen of my Italian restaurant Nostrana, in Portland, Ore. When our local farm partners begin delivering small, flavor-packed bulbs with fantastically frilly fronds, our daily menu can adapt with dishes that match the weather. We might offer a

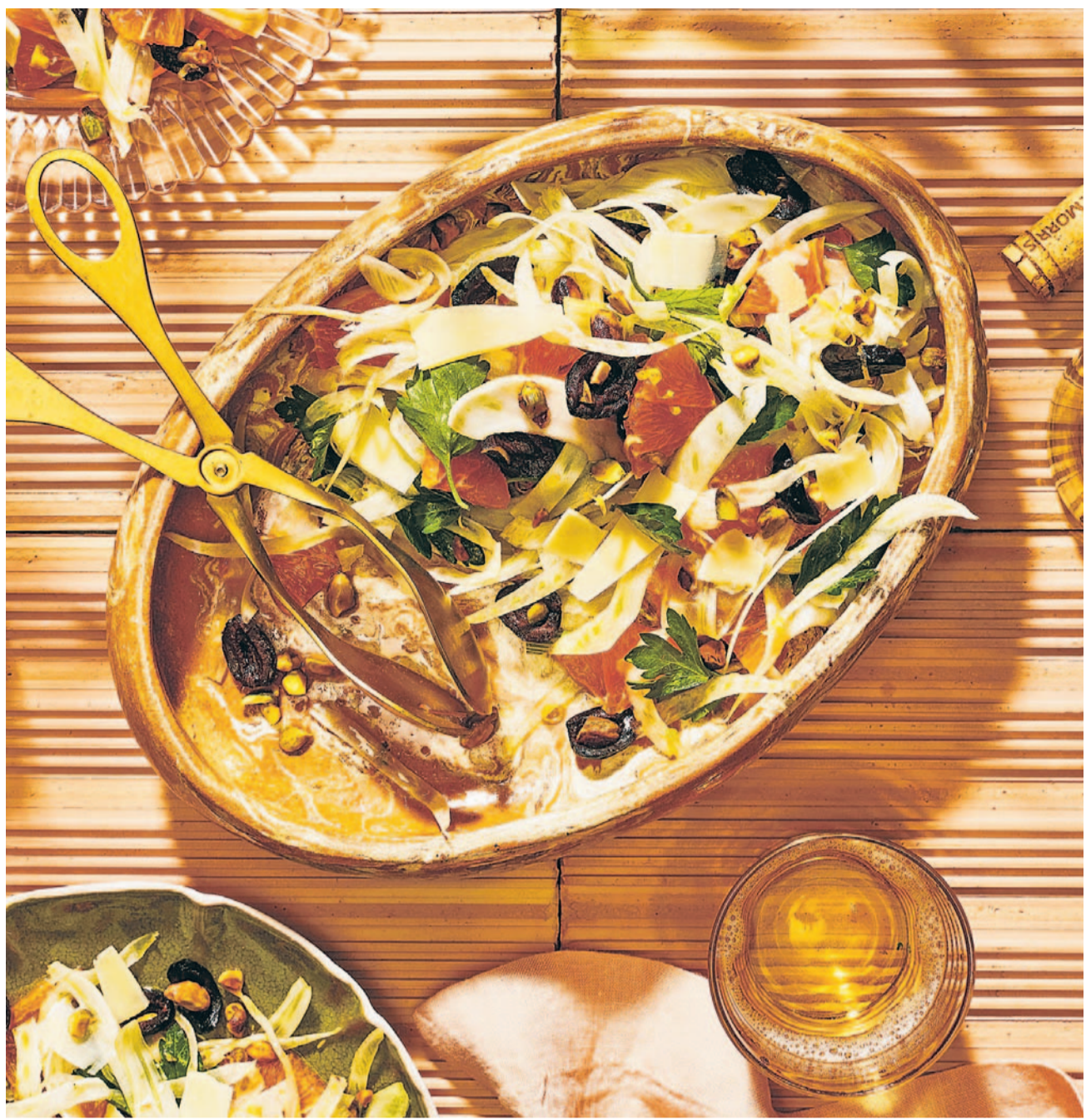
fennel salad on a bright spring day, a creamy fennel pasta if the breezes are cool, or a cozy fennel braise served on polenta when the Portland drizzle inevitably returns.

So fennel understands our seasonal mood swings. But do we understand fennel? Many people don't know how to cook this wonderful vegetable, and some even think they don't like it.

First, let's address the elephant in the room: Yes, fennel tastes like licorice. But only faintly, in the way many other lovely, springy things do. Tarragon? Chervil? Like these, fennel delivers a subtle and utterly beguiling licorice whiff. Fennel is also fibrous, but dealing with the texture requires no high-level technique. Both flavor and texture will change depending simply on how you cut the bulb and how you cook it.

The bulb consists of thick layers connected at the base by a dense core. Your fennel may still have stems and possibly fronds attached at the top, though some supermarkets trim those off. Every part of fennel is edible, so I like to put the whole vegetable to use. The stems are great chopped, in a soup or a pasta, and the fronds will work anywhere you'd use fresh dill.

The outer layer of fennel can be particularly fibrous, so I sometimes pull it off, though you risk losing a lot of fennel that way if your bulb is small. Another approach to dealing with a stringy exterior is to remove the very outermost layer with a vege-



FROND FEELINGS Find recipes for this fresh fennel and citrus salad plus a luxurious fennel Alfredo pasta at wsj.com/food.

table peeler, as you might peel a tough stalk of celery.

Next, cut the bulb in half lengthwise, from the stem end through the core. Use a paring knife to cut away the core, which is dense and takes longer to cook than the rest of the bulb. You'll want to keep the core intact to hold the layers together in some cases, such as when

you cut the fennel into wedges for braising.

For a salad, I like to slice the halves crosswise, preferably with a mandolin slicer. Cutting across the long fibers keeps the slices crunchy but not stringy. For a hearty salad with citrus, nuts and cheese, ¼-inch-thick slices are good. For a light salad—the kind you might have before or af-

ter a big meal—½ inch or thinner is best.

Moist cooking methods—braising, boiling—mellow fennel's flavor while rendering its texture tender and silky. No dish illustrates this transformation better than fennel "à la Grecque," actually a French method in which you stew vegetables with oil, herbs and an acid such as lemon juice or vinegar. Cooking fennel this way produces a tender spear similar to a pickle, a great accompaniment to crusty bread or a charcuterie plate.

Making fennel à la Grecque is so simple you really don't need a recipe. Just cut the bulb in half lengthwise and then into ½-inch wedges, leaving the core intact. Boil a few cups of water, add some vinegar, extra-virgin olive oil and spices—coriander and fennel seed are

good. Then simmer about 10 minutes, or until tender. Let cool, stir in more oil and leave the fennel slices in the liquid. Serve warm or cold, ideally after the fennel has had some time to absorb the flavors of the cooking liquid.

One of my favorite ways to use fennel is not as the main act, but chopped and added as a flavor enhancer. Combined with other vegetables in, say, a mirepoix—the flavor base of onions, celery and carrots cooked slowly in butter or oil—fennel comes across subtly, an intriguing element that adds complexity without being intrusive. In an Alfredo pasta, the flavor of fennel combines with leeks to elevate the classic cream sauce. While you're at it, chop up the fronds and throw them in, too. Your frittatas, for instance, will instantly ascend to another level.



Braised Fennel and Bitter Greens

This recipe was inspired by one in Marcella Hazan's classic cookbook "Marcella Cucina." It's great on polenta, or as an accompaniment to pork, fish or roast chicken.

Total Time 40 minutes

Serves 4-6

1 large fennel bulb

½ cup olive oil
½ medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
1 large bunch or 2 small bunches escarole or curly endive, torn into bite-size leaves
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Remove the outer layer and stems from

the fennel bulb. Cut the bulb in half lengthwise and remove the core. Use a mandoline or sharp knife to slice fennel thinly, about ⅛ inch.
2. Heat oil in a straight-sided large sauté pan over medium-low heat. Add sliced onions and cook until completely



wilted but not browned, about 10 minutes.

3. Add fennel and greens, lower heat and cover. Cook until meltingly tender, about 20 minutes. If vegetables become dry and stick, add a few tablespoons of water. Season with salt and pepper.

Feast Your Eyes on Ube

The ingredient has conquered Instagram with its vivid violet hue. Filipino cooks have long loved its nutty taste.

THE ONLY RULE when making ube halaya in my Filipino family: If you're snagging a bite, you'd better stir. The bubbling, electric-purple jam must be mixed steadily for nearly an hour on the stovetop. Once it cooks down to a viscous consistency, the jam delivers the concentrated flavor of the purple yam ube, sweet and nutty with a fragrant vanilla note—a taste growing increasingly familiar stateside.

"I think there's a sense of wonder around the flavor," said Brooklyn chef Angela Dimayuga. Her recent cookbook (right), "Filipinx: Heritage Recipes From The Diaspora" (Abrams), includes dishes that derive their round, mellow taste and vivid color from ube.

"It's this royal purple, like Grimace from McDonald's," Ms. Dimayuga said. No doubt the Instagram-friendly shade accounts, at least in part, for the ingredient's recent spike in popularity, with a torrent of posts flaunting everything from ube doughnuts to ube lattes, all emitting that distinctive deep-violet glow.

Indigenous to the Philippines, ube traditionally features in sweets such as pandesal, a soft, yeast-risen roll; ice cream; polvoron, a type of shortbread; and chewy pastilla candies like the ones Ms. Dimayuga shares a recipe for here. She swaps in a combination of sweetened condensed milk and dry milk for the kalabaw (water buffalo) milk typically used in

the Philippines, and she seasons the ube halaya base with a balancing pinch of salt and a little grated lime zest to brighten the flavor, which she describes as reminiscent of vanilla with hints of pistachio.

In Ms. Dimayuga's view, ube pairs well with "anything milky and creamy." Across the Filipino diaspora, chefs are putting the ingredient to use in all manner of desserts, many of them creamy, some of them traditional, others wholly new.

"We've tried ube with everything," said Gemma Ballesteros, founder and owner of Marley's Treats in Hayward, Calif., including horchata, oreo cookies and the tropical leaf pandan. The bakery's popular "finkle," an ube crinkle cookie, comes filled with a caramelly leche flan. On April 30, the Marley's Treats food truck will roll up to the Ube Fest in San Francisco's District Six with ube cupcakes and macarons, ube frozen treats and more.

Thessa Diadem, pastry director at All Day Baby and Here's Looking at You in Los Angeles, makes ube cookies with caramelized white chocolate, marshmallow and coconut. She tops her ube pie with a dollop of chamomile whipped cream.

"I imagined that adding a floral component to the ube [would] complement its nuttier flavor profile, and the combination was better than I imagined," Ms. Diadem said. "In the Philippines, ube flavor is used how vanilla is used in the U.S."



PURPLE REIGN These ube candies are easy to make and stunning to behold.

Inspired by all the ube experimentation, I decided to attempt my Tita Lorna's ube halaya recipe, among my favorite treats when I was growing up. One recent afternoon, I began the long process of simmering and stirring, for the first time solo. By the end, my arm was aching, but the result was just as delicious as I remembered. That

taste will always be a bridge to my family and heritage.

"The recent rise in recognition of Filipino chefs is probably why the interest in ube has soared," said Ms. Diadem. "This is a flavor that hits some kind of core memory in a Filipino chef, and we're more than happy to share it with the world."

—Nina Molina

Pastillas de Ube (Soft Milk Purple Yam Candies)

Total Time 2½ hours (includes chilling time) **Makes** About 4 dozen candies

1 cup ube halaya (purple yam jam), such as Pamana brand
7 ounces sweetened condensed milk
½ cup instant nonfat dry milk
½ teaspoon finely grated lime zest
1 teaspoon kosher salt
2 tablespoons granulated sugar or to taste, plus ½ cup for rolling

1. In a medium nonstick saucepan or skillet over medium heat, cook ube halaya with condensed milk until thickened and jammy, 6-8 minutes. Add powdered milk, lime zest, salt and sugar. Continue cooking and stirring until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl and cover with plastic wrap, pressed onto surface of ube mixture. Let cool.

2. Turn out ube mixture onto a work surface and roll into logs ½-inch thick. (It will have a texture like Play-Doh, but softer.) Sprinkle some sugar over work surface and roll logs in sugar until liberally coated. Cut into 1½-inch pieces.

3. Wrap pastillas tightly in squares of parchment paper and twist at ends. Transfer to refrigerator. Once chilled, pastillas are ready to eat. They will keep, in fridge, up to 1 month.

—Adapted from "Filipinx" by Angela Dimayuga (Abrams)

EATING & DRINKING



ON WINE / LETTIE TEAGUE



Petit Chablis: A Grand Spring Wine

THE REFERENCE BOOK “Larousse Wine” describes Petit Chablis as “lighter, with fewer flavours than Chablis...but it’s cheaper!” Does that sound like a wine you’d want to drink?

Perhaps the fact that Petit Chablis is treated like a “lesser” version of Chablis by some wine professionals is the reason it’s so little talked about among regular wine drinkers. It’s a wine as summarily dismissed as it is overlooked. Yet after tasting iterations from some top producers, I’m convinced that this wine warrants greater respect and maybe a much better moniker, too.

If the editors of “Larousse Wine” were dismissive, wine writers Hugh

Johnson and Jancis Robinson went them one better in “The World Atlas of Wine” (6th edition), pronouncing that Petit Chablis “from the outlying region can be a thin, unsatisfying drink in all but the best hands.” Unfortunately, the authors fail to mention to whom those “best hands” belong.

A look at the map in “The World Atlas of Wine” reveals Petit Chablis vineyards all over the “outlying” areas of Chablis, situated on both sides of the River Serein that divides the region. Indeed, the Petit Chablis appellation is scattered in a noncontiguous fashion, like confetti sprinkled over Chablis. This patchwork of land adds up to around

3,000 acres or about a third of the more than 9,000 acres that comprise Chablis.

The soils of Petit Chablis are accordingly diverse—mixed limestone and marl—and the vineyards range from flat land to hillside slopes. The soil in Petit Chablis is relatively thin, and the subsoil is mainly Portlandien, whereas the subsoil in other Chablis AC’s is mostly Kimmeridgian. The vignerons with holdings in the higher-elevation vineyards face an enhanced danger of frost—long a problem throughout Chablis, the northernmost subregion of Burgundy. And while climate change has been helpful to the region ac-

ording to some winemakers I contacted, too-warm vintages present challenges, too. A crisp but balanced acidity is a key characteristic of good Chablis, and as Vincent Dampt, owner and winemaker at Domaine Vincent Dampt, noted, “With hot temperatures during harvest you lose acidity quickly.”

Mr. Dampt sources the grapes for his Petit Chablis from two locations—one block in the town of Fyé, on the Serein’s right bank, the other from Beine, on the left bank. “There is a contrast between these two blocks, and I like to blend them,” Mr. Dampt explained. “The Fyé part gives the fruit, but I like the texture and tension of the part in Beine.” The result is the fresh, wonderfully well balanced 2020 Domaine Vincent Dampt Petit Chablis (\$20), as well made as it’s well priced.

Anthony Lynch, sourcing manager and content director for Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant in Berkeley, Calif., also noted the importance of good vineyard location for Petit Chablis. Mr. Lynch’s father, Kermit Lynch, has imported Chablis for many decades, including the wines of Roland Lavantureux, one of the region’s most-respected producers. “My dad often said that the domaine’s Petit Chablis and Chablis vines were separated by an imaginary line running through the vineyards, and therefore their Petit could easily perform as well as, or better than, many Chablis.” The 2019 Roland Lavantureux Petit Chablis (\$35) was another of my favorites, a tangy, limestone-inflected wine with a long, mineral finish.

Mr. Lynch emailed a 1983 retail brochure wherein his father extolled the virtues of the 1982 Roland Lavantureux Petit Chablis—the “Value of the Month.” Mr. Lynch the elder writes, “In terms of quality a well-vinified Petit Chablis is preferable to a poor-quality Chablis. Don’t let the *petit* scare you away from this little lovely.” His son noted that while Petit Chablis is a “little” wine, it is also a wine “full of charm and deliciousness.” I’d say those words certainly describe the 2019 version of the Roland Lavantureux Petit Chablis, though I’d swap in words like “precise” and “mineral” for “little.”

Though, at \$20 and up, a good Petit Chablis is a stone-cold bargain compared with other white Burgundies, the 12 wines I purchased for my tasting could not be called cheap. One of my favorites, the 2019 Moreau-Naudet Petit Chablis, cost \$35—as much as some premier cru Chablis wines from other producers. And I’d warrant the Moreau-Naudet Petit could

keep them company. It wasn’t the least bit “petit” to me but, rather, impressively textured, a medium-to full-bodied wine with a long, mineral finish. It is produced from vineyards whose “yields are lower than average,” according to the distributor’s website.

While the Moreau-Naudet Petit Chablis definitely had more texture and weight than some of the other wines I tasted, it’s nevertheless a wine to be consumed in a zesty rather than contemplative fashion according to the domaine’s proprietor, Virginie Moreau, who took over the business in 2016 following the untimely death of her husband Stéphane Moreau. “Petit Chablis must be tasted easily, it must make you greedy to taste the rest,” she wrote in an email.

A good Petit Chablis is a bargain compared with other white Burgundies.

I love the idea of a wine that makes you greedy for more, and that was certainly the case with two more Petit Chablis I tasted: The fresh and fruity 2020 Domaine Gérard Tremblay Petit Chablis (\$35) comes from a fifth generation Chablis producer. And the slightly more plump yet also quite lively 2019 Isabelle et Denis Pommier “Hauterivien” Petit-Chablis (\$30) is from a husband and wife team whose Petit Chablis has an average vine age of 25 years and is blend of organically grown grapes from vineyards in two villages, Lignorelles and Villy, on both Portlandian and Kimmeridgian limestone soils.

While these five wines were standouts, there were a few disappointments as well—wines that were herbaceous and green with an acidity that could be called shrill. Perhaps they came from too-cold vineyard sites, or grapes that weren’t fully ripe. In any case, they fit the description of a “thin, unsatisfying drink” put forward in “The World Atlas of Wine.”

Maybe Petit Chablis is simply too broad an appellation with too many vineyard sites of varying quality. Certainly, some talented winemakers share this appellation with producers less focused on quality than quantity. As Mr. Dampt observed, “The name ‘Petit’ is really reductive.” The top wines I tasted were by no means “little” in character or taste.

► Email Lettie at wine@wsj.com.



OENOFILE / BIG NAMES IN PETIT CHABLIS

2019 Roland Lavantureux Petit Chablis \$35 The sons of Roland Lavantureux have taken over the family domaine and turned out a wonderfully saline wine with a mouthwatering mineral finish. This Petit Chablis definitely drinks above its appellation.

2020 Domaine Gérard Tremblay Petit Chablis \$35 A new generation has also stepped up at this domaine, with Vincent Tremblay, son of Gérard, assuming a more active role. This iteration of Petit Chablis is a fresh, lively wine with a pleasingly crisp acidity.

2020 Domaine Vincent Dampt Petit Chablis \$20 From a family of winemakers, Vincent Dampt trained in the Jura, at Burgundy’s Domaine Leflaive and in New Zealand before returning to Chablis. He produces this juicy, well-balanced wine from two vineyard sites.

2019 Isabelle et Denis Pommier “Hauterivien” Petit-Chablis \$30 The Pommier team have built a portfolio of first-rate wines. Their grapes are organic—a rarity in Chablis—and this is a lively, generously proportioned wine with pleasing fruity aromas.

2019 Moreau-Naudet Petit Chablis \$35 This lush, textured Petit Chablis is produced from low-yielding vineyards. Moreau-Naudet proprietor Virginie Moreau said Petit Chablis should make a drinker “greedy” for more, and that is certainly true of her wine.

SLOW FOOD FAST / SATISFYING AND SEASONAL FOOD IN ABOUT 30 MINUTES



The Chef
Mason Hereford

His Restaurants
Turkey and the Wolf and Molly’s Rise and Shine, both in New Orleans

What He’s Known For
Inventive sandwiches packed with flavor. Blending home-made with store-bought ingredients to great effect. A generous hand with seasoning.

Iceberg Wedge With Blue Cheese and Everything-Bagel Topping

“IF WE’RE KNOWN for a salad, this is it,” chef Mason Hereford said of the blue-cheese wedge he serves at Turkey and the Wolf in New Orleans. In his third Slow Food Fast recipe, Mr. Hereford offers a streamlined version of “The Wedge,” as it’s called in his forthcoming cookbook. But all the key elements are here: crisp iceberg lettuce, a scrumptious buttermilk blue cheese dressing, cherry tomatoes, warm bacon bits, fresh dill. An everything-bagel topping adds crunch.

Total Time 25 minutes
Serves 4-8
1½ cups crumbled blue cheese
1 cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream
¼ cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice plus ½ lemon
1 tablespoon plus ¼ cup poppy seeds
1½ teaspoons hot sauce
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup sesame seeds
¼ cup dried minced garlic
¼ cup dried minced onion
1 pound slab bacon, diced
2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved
Extra-virgin olive oil
2 heads iceberg lettuce
½ cup dill, roughly chopped

“The thing we didn’t know when we were first testing was just how much everything-bagel topping this can take,” Mr. Hereford said. “And it can take A LOT. We pack it on!” He does not recommend buying the everything-bagel seasoning pre-jarred, however. “You can’t control the salt level and balance,” he said. His own potent mix includes poppy seeds, sesame seeds, and dried garlic and onion. “I’m not big on subtle flavors,” the chef said. “I have no restraint.” —Kitty Greenwald

1. Make the buttermilk blue cheese dressing: In a small bowl, combine blue cheese, mayonnaise, sour cream, buttermilk, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon poppy seeds and hot sauce. Season with salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste. Set aside.
2. Make the everything-bagel topping: In a medium heavy skillet over medium heat, combine sesame seeds, ¼ cup poppy seeds, dried minced garlic and dried minced onion. Toast, tossing, until seeds smell sweet and nutty, about 3 minutes. Spread seeds over a heatproof tray to cool.
3. Wipe out skillet. Add bacon and return to medium heat. Fry bacon until golden brown on all sides and lightly crisp

- at edges, about 8 minutes total. Use a slotted spoon to transfer bacon to a paper-towel-lined plate.
4. In a small bowl, gently toss cherry tomatoes with a drizzle of oil, a squeeze of lemon juice and a generous pinch each of salt and pepper.
5. Assemble the salad: Tear away any bruised outer leaves from lettuce and slice heads into quarters. Arrange lettuce wedges on a platter or individual plates and season with a pinch each of salt and pepper. Pour a good amount of blue-cheese dressing over top and sprinkle generously with everything-bagel seasoning. Garnish with dressed tomatoes, bacon, dill and more black pepper.



SALAD DO’S This classic iceberg wedge comes with a buttermilk blue cheese dressing and a crunchy everything-bagel topping.