

What's News

Business & Finance

U.S. inflation edged down to an 8.3% annual rate in April but remained close to the fastest pace in four decades as the economy continued to face upward price pressures. **A1, A2**

◆ **Major U.S. stock indexes** fell after the April inflation data were released, with the S&P 500, Nasdaq and Dow losing 1.6%, 3.2% and 1%, respectively. **A1**

◆ **Disney reported** better-than-expected quarterly subscription numbers for its Disney+ streaming service, avoiding a slowdown that dogged Netflix. **A1**

◆ **A selloff in stablecoin** TerraUSD accelerated, briefly sending the cryptocurrency's price to less than a quarter of its \$1 peg. **B1**

◆ **Instacart filed** confidentially to go public, a long-awaited move that comes after the company recently cut its valuation by 40%. **B1**

◆ **The SEC is investigating** Musk's late disclosure last month of his sizable stake in Twitter, according to people familiar with the matter. **B1**

◆ **China's consumer inflation** edged up in April and factory-gate price pressures remained elevated, lifted by effects of Covid-19 lockdowns and the war in Ukraine. **A9**

◆ **Duke Realty rejected** a nearly \$24 billion buyout offer from warehousing giant Prologis, calling the unsolicited offer insufficient. **B1**

◆ **Moderna said its newly** hired finance chief left the company, citing an internal investigation by Dentsply, his previous employer. **B1**

World-Wide

◆ **A Russian soldier** in Ukrainian custody will be the first to stand trial on war-crimes charges, Ukraine's prosecutor-general said, after an investigation alleged he fatally shot at an unarmed 62-year-old man near his home in northeastern Ukraine. **A7, A8**

◆ **Senate Democrats failed** to advance a bill seeking to ensure women's access to abortion, in a vote designed to draw a clear contrast with Republicans ahead of a potential Supreme Court decision overturning Roe v. Wade looming just months before the midterm elections. **A4**

◆ **Relatives of victims** of the 2021 condo tower collapse in Surfside, Fla., reached a proposed \$997 million settlement to resolve wrongful death claims against defendants sued over the building's failure. **A3**

◆ **Federal revenue** almost doubled in April compared with a year earlier, reaching a record and driving a monthly government surplus of \$308 billion, also a record. **A4**

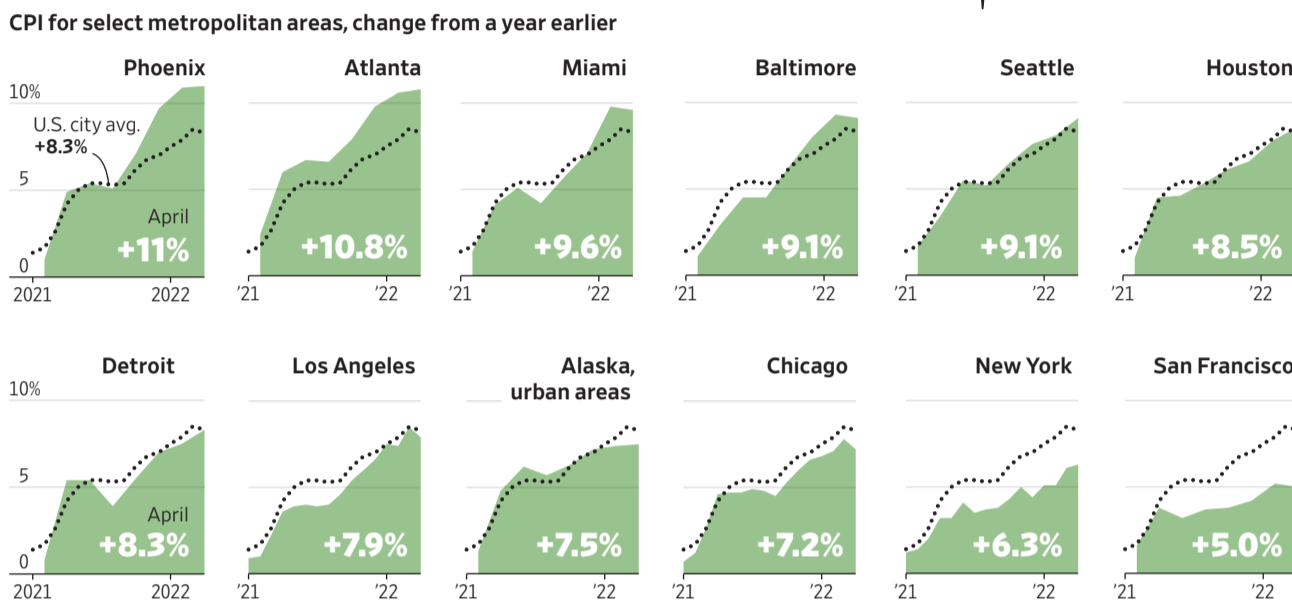
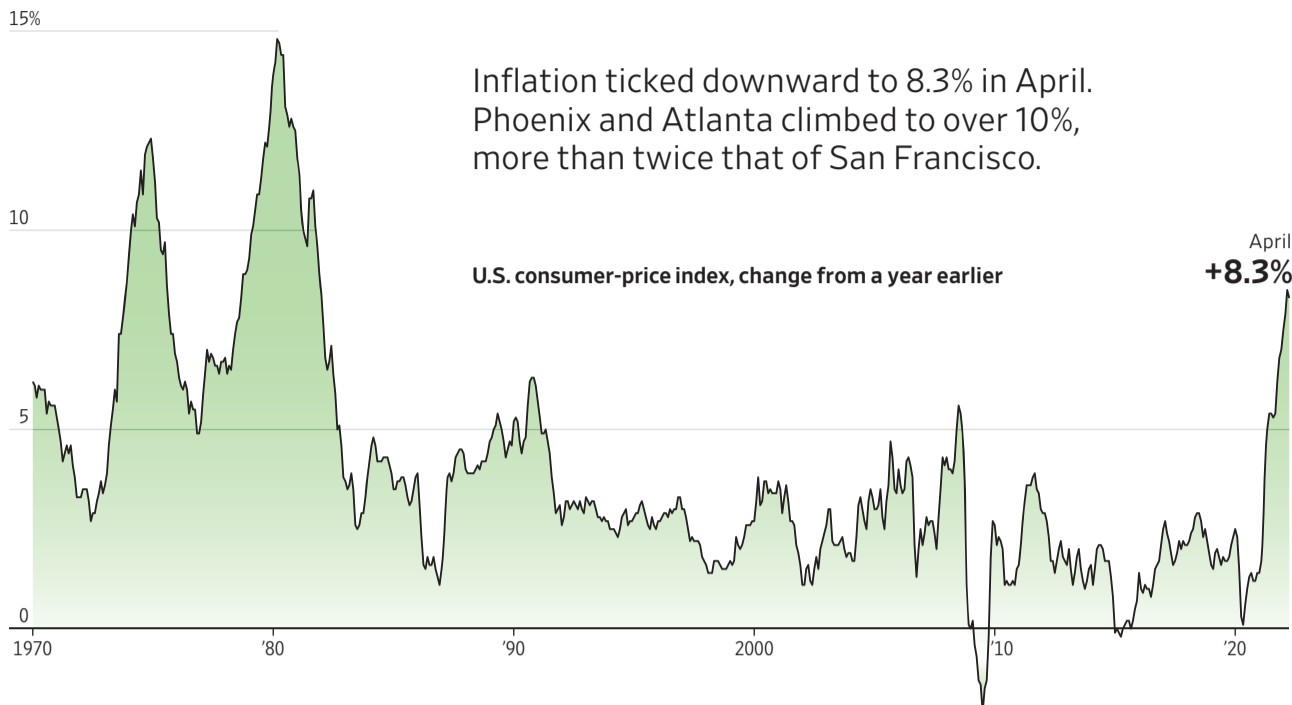
◆ **North Korea, which** hasn't administered a Covid-19 vaccine, imposed a lockdown in all its major cities after reporting its first local case. **A9**

◆ **The Senate narrowly** confirmed law professor Alvaro Bedoya to the FTC, giving Democrats a 3-2 majority at the commission. **A4**

◆ **A Florida judge blocked** a congressional map approved by Republican Gov. DeSantis because it broke up a plurality Black district in the northern part of the state. **A4**

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Note: Data for Chicago, Los Angeles and New York are monthly. All other metropolitan areas are every other month. Source: U.S. Labor Department

Inflation Pressure Continues, Despite Slight Slip

Drop to 8.3% is the first in 8 months; still, there's little evidence showing that prices are cooling

By GWYNN GUILFORD

U.S. inflation edged down to an 8.3% annual rate in April but remained close to the fastest pace in four decades as the economy continued to face upward price pressures.

The Labor Department's consumer-price index reading last month marked the first drop for inflation in eight months, down from an 8.5% annual rate in March. The decline came primarily from a slight easing in April gasoline prices, which have since reached a new high. Broadly, the report offered little evidence that inflation was cooling.

Prices rose for groceries as well as dining out, airline travel and other services that consumers are turning to as they shift from spending heavily on goods from earlier in the pandemic. Airline fares surged 18.6% in April from a month earlier, the fastest rise

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Fresh Worries About Fed Send Stocks Lower

By MATT GROSSMAN AND JOE WALLACE

Stocks fell Wednesday after fresh data showed that inflation—though slightly down—remained higher than expected last month, feeding renewed apprehension about the Federal Reserve's likely response and extending a punishing stretch for equities.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell for a fifth day in a row, the Nasdaq Composite lost 3.2%, and bitcoin fell 8.5%.

Markets entered 2022 on a multiyear winning streak, but persistent inflation and the prospect of a sustained cycle of interest-rate increases have rattled what was strong investor sentiment.

The S&P 500 declined 65.87 points, or 1.6%, to close at 3935.18. The technology-focused Nasdaq was down 373.44 to 11364.24, its lowest close since November 2020. The Dow fell 326.63, or 1%, to 31834.11, marking its largest five-day percentage decline in

nearly two years.

The day offered no relief for anxious stock investors, who have been bracing for the Fed to remove more of its economic support. The S&P 500 turned lower in the afternoon after spending much of the morning in the green, and its losses deepened as the closing bell neared. There is a long way to go before rising prices come back under control, investors and analysts warned, giving rise to volatility as financial conditions continue to tighten.

"The Band-Aid is still coming off slowly," said Michael Farr, chief executive of investment-advisory firm Farr, Miller & Washington. "According to the Fed, we're not near the end of this process that everyone wants over."

The consumer-price index increased 8.3% in April from the same month a year ago, data released on Wednesday showed, decelerating from an 8.5% annual rate in March but above the 8.1% expected by economists. Lower annual in-

flation last month marks the first monthly easing of price increases since August 2021.

Volatile markets have been primed to react strongly to any headline hinting at persistent price pressures, said David Kotok, chief investment of-

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- ◆ Cryptocurrency TerraUSD craters..... B1
- ◆ Rise in CPI derails Treasury bond rally..... B11

INSIDE



UKRAINE CRISIS
After Russia retreats, Ukrainians return home to villages of ruins. **A8**



BUSINESS & FINANCE
Elon Musk is under investigation for late disclosure of his stake in Twitter. **B1**

It's Just Another Manic...Wednesday?!

When employees can pick which days to go in, middle one is the top choice

By PETER GRANT

The pandemic has turned a lot of things upside down. That includes the week.

For years, Mondays sort of haunted the weekend, a looming day when the fun would be over and it was time to get serious again.

But as employers start asking their work-from-home people to come in part of the time, a different day is taking center stage: It's Wednesday.

At lunchtime on a recent Wednesday in Midtown Manhattan—a place that still bears

plenty of pandemic vacancy—most tables were full at Oceana, Del Frisco's, Boucherie, Bobby Van's Steakhouse and other fancy eateries.

Groups who showed up at the Mediterranean restaurant Limani had to wait. "From now on they should make reservations," advised George Saites, Limani's manager.

Commuter rail lines in cities like Boston and San Francisco found Wednesday typically the busiest weekday in April. The same is true of hotel occupancy. *Please turn to page A10*



Disney+ Bucks Trend With Hefty Gains in Subscribers

By ROBBIE WHELAN

Walt Disney Co. reported better-than-expected subscription numbers for its Disney+ streaming service in the most recent quarter, avoiding a slowdown that dogged streaming rival Netflix Inc.

In the company's fiscal second quarter earnings report, Disney reported 7.9 million new Disney+ subscribers to reach 137.7 million subscribers, up from 129.8 million in the prior quarter. Analysts polled by

FactSet had expected the company to add 5.2 million net new subscribers to the platform, to bring the total to about 135 million.

Chief Executive Bob Chapek reaffirmed Disney's targets of signing up between 230 million and 260 million subscribers to Disney+ and having the streaming video-on-demand business achieve profitability by September 2024, saying both goals were "very achievable."

Mr. Chapek said the company has not yet tapped into

wide swaths of potential new subscribers and pointed to the company's slate of new TV and film offerings this year as the main driver of new paying customers.

Shares of Disney fell 3% in extended-hours trading after initially rising on the earnings news. Before the results, the stock closed at \$105.21, down 2.3% during the regular session.

The world's largest entertainment company posted earnings of \$470 million, or 26

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China's No. 2 Emerges From Shadow of Xi

Premier Li Keqiang presses president to dial back policies contributing to slowdown

By LINGLING WEI

For years, President Xi Jinping has sidelined China's second most powerful political figure, Premier Li Keqiang. Now, Mr. Li is re-emerging as a force in his own right, a potential counterbalance atop the Chinese government that hasn't been seen for nearly a decade.

With China mired in its worst economic funk in recent memory, Mr. Li is helping press China's authoritarian leader to dial back some measures that sent the country away from Western-style capitalism and contributed to China's economic

slowdown, according to government officials and advisers close to decision-making.

Under Mr. Li's influence, those people said, Beijing recently eased a regulatory crackdown on private technology firms, loosened lending to property developers and home buyers, and acted to help some manufacturers resume production when much of China has been forced into lockdowns by Mr. Xi's zero-Covid approach.

Mr. Li, 66 years old, is also trying to influence the

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THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING

RINGING IN THE NEW NORMAL

R1-10

- ◆ China's consumer inflation rose slightly in April..... A9

U.S. NEWS

Prices Report Cinches Fed's Rate Path

By NICK TIMIRAOS

Another strong inflation reading in April is likely to keep pressure on the Federal Reserve to continue raising rates in increments of at least a half percentage point at the central bank's coming policy meetings.

Wednesday's report on consumer prices offered few signs that would give Fed officials comfort to dial back a more aggressive pace of rate increases this summer. And it could lead more of them to conclude rates will need to rise closer to 4% over the next

12 to 18 months rather than to a level around 3% that most of them projected at their policy meeting two months ago.

The rapid pace of U.S. inflation last month offered little reassurance to the Fed even though the year-over-year rate of growth slowed. On a monthly basis, the consumer-price index rose a seasonally adjusted 0.3% in April, according to a Labor Department report on Wednesday. CPI also rose 8.3% from a year earlier, down from the annual increase of 8.5% in March.

Declines in energy prices offset large jumps in the

prices of new cars and airfares and steady increases in rents in April. The core CPI, which excludes food and energy, rose 0.6% in April.

Because a decline in 12-month inflation readings has been largely anticipated, the question for Fed policy makers now shifts to where inflation might settle and whether that level will be unacceptably high.

The monthly rate of increase in core inflation had eased somewhat in February and March. While Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said last week it would take more than another month of data to show sus-

tained improvement, Wednesday's report moved in the wrong direction.

Other Fed officials have said they are no longer focusing on the particular idiosyncratic drivers of price gains, such as an unusually large jump in airfares in April.

"At this point I don't care what the reasons are. Inflation's too high and my job is to get it down," Fed governor Christopher Waller said Tuesday.

The central bank lifted its benchmark policy rate by half a percentage point last week to a target range between 0.75% and 1%.

Biden's Third Pick On Board Confirmed

The Senate voted to confirm Philip Jefferson, an economist and administrator at Davidson College of North Carolina, to the Federal Reserve on Wednesday.

Mr. Jefferson, who was approved on a bipartisan 91-7 vote, is the third nominee of President Biden to win a seat on the central bank's seven-person board of governors. The

Senate confirmed economist Lisa Cook on Tuesday and Fed governor Lael Brainard as the central bank's vice chairwoman last month.

With the confirmation of Mr. Jefferson, three of the six Fed governors are now appointees of Mr. Biden, fulfilling promises he made to improve the diversity of its top leadership. Mr. Jefferson and Ms. Cook are Black.

Next up is a confirmation vote, set for Thursday, for Fed Chairman Jerome Powell to serve a second four-year term.

—Nick Timiraos

Inflation Pressure Continues

Continued from Page One on record. The cost of full-service restaurant dining rose 0.9% from March, the biggest gain since October.

"Inflation is no longer just contained to the supply chain—these pressures are actually becoming more broad-based," said Aneta Markowska, chief financial economist at Jefferies LLC, referring to disruptions in goods supplies that initially drove the run-up in prices.

U.S. stock indexes wavered amid a stretch of market volatility. Investors are closely watching inflation trends for clues on the pace of the Federal Reserve's interest-rate increases.

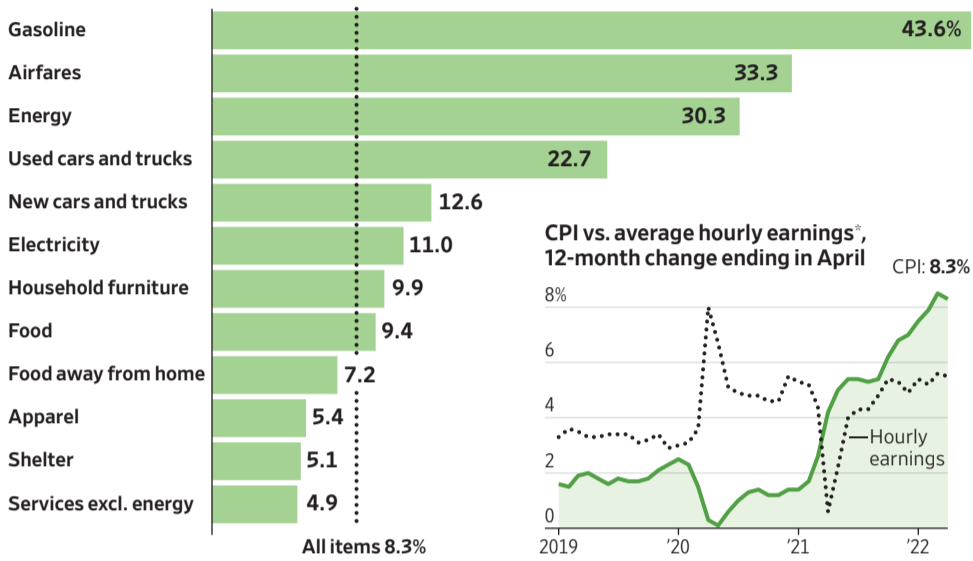
The CPI measures what consumers pay for goods and services. The annual rate of inflation has risen sharply since early 2021, when the U.S. economy's rebound from the pandemic accelerated, leading to supply disruptions and other imbalances that have put upward pressure on prices.

On a monthly basis, the CPI rose a seasonally adjusted 0.3% last month after a 1.2% increase in March. However, the so-called core-price index—which excludes the often-volatile categories of food and energy—increased 0.6% on the month, a sharp pickup from March's 0.3% gain, providing a sign of broad-based inflationary pressure.

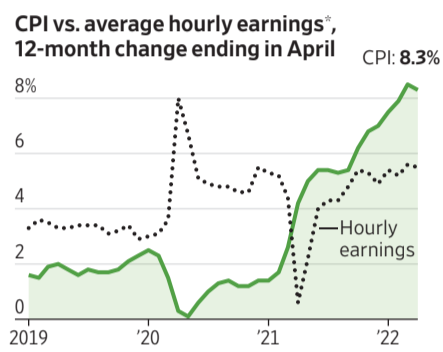
Services prices, excluding energy, rose 0.7% in April from March, the fastest one-month increase since 1990.

Even though gas and energy prices eased slightly in April, they still remain high. Inflation's elevated level continues to result in a decline in real wage growth.

Consumer-price index for select items, 12-month change ending in April



For all employees, total private, seasonally adjusted. Source: Labor Department (select items); Labor Department via the St. Louis Fed (earnings vs. CPI)



April's report offered a mixed picture for vehicle prices, which have risen sharply since last year due to demand and supply shortages. Used car and truck prices were up 22.7% on the year in April, down from a 35.3% rise in March. But new vehicle prices were up 13.2% from a year ago in April, the largest 12-month increase since 1949.

The Fed faces the tricky feat of tightening monetary policy enough to quell inflation and cool the economy without throttling growth and causing a recession. Central-bank officials raised rates on May 4 by half a percentage point, the biggest increase since 2000.

"What we're starting to see is inflation is spreading to the services side of the economy—it's emanating from the labor market side," Ms. Markowska

said. "That's less likely to go away on its own, so the Fed will have to work that much harder to get us back to 2% inflation."

The U.S. economy added 428,000 jobs in April, the 12th straight month in which job gains exceeded 400,000.

Despite the furious pace of hiring, there was still a yawning gap between job openings and the pool of available workers—a sign that demand for labor is far outstripping supply. Employers are trying to hire workers to meet increased demand, posting 11.5 million job openings earlier this spring, the highest in records dating to 2000. The number of times workers quit also rose to a record in March, at 4.5 million.

Those dynamics are pushing up wage gains—adding multiple pressures on inflation. Some employers are rais-

ing prices to offset higher labor costs. Strong wage growth and hiring are also simply putting more money in consumers' pockets.

The brisk pace of spending is a sign that consumers are for now able to absorb higher prices.

"We're still at a point where consumer and business resistance to higher prices is severely reduced because no one has confidence that if they wait they'll find the price they want later," said Lou Crandall, chief economist of Wrightson ICAP.

A steady pickup in housing costs, which account for nearly one-third of the CPI, is also adding to inflationary pressure. Both tenant rent and so-called owners' equivalent rent, which estimates what homeowners would pay each month to rent their own home,

rose 4.8% from a year earlier, a pace last seen in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Wendy Fisher, owner of Good Day Pet Sitters, a boutique dog-walking and pet-sitting service in Dallas, said inflation has strained her otherwise booming business. Rents have shot up in the neighborhoods she serves, pushing her workers to areas outside the city. Higher gasoline prices have left her staff paying around twice as much for travel compared with a year ago.

"I have a really great staff and I need to retain these people—I don't want to lose them over the cost of gas, or to a retail store where they can park their car and stay all day," Ms. Fisher said.

Most economists expect the 12-month inflation rate to come down in the coming months, in part due to arithmetic factors known as base effects. That is, the consumer-price index rose sharply in the spring and early summer of 2021. As those earlier readings fall out of the basis for comparison, the 12-month inflation readings will likely decline, even if inflation accelerates on a monthly basis.

With inflationary pressure from the services sector building, goods prices will have to slow markedly to bring overall inflation down more substantially.

Supply-chain pressures continue to be an issue, with China's strict lockdowns to contain a Covid-19 outbreak potentially prolonging manufacturing and other disruptions. "A lot of this [inflation] is still driven by logistical bottlenecks and as those ease you can get some payback in some categories like autos," said Mr. Crandall, the economist at Wrightson ICAP.

Stocks Fall On Fresh Worries

Continued from Page One ficer at Cumberland Advisors. "We're in those kinds of crazy times," he said.

The inflation data sent short- and long-term government-bond yields converging, which investors said signaled concerns about tighter monetary policy and growth. The yield on the two-year Treasury note—highly responsive to expected Fed tightening—rose to 2.629%, from 2.623% at Tuesday's settlement. The yield on the 10-year Treasury declined to 2.918%, from 2.990% a day earlier. Bond yields fall as prices rise.

Riskier assets continued to suffer. Niche pharmaceutical companies were among the Nasdaq's biggest losers on the day, with larger technology firms such as Netflix and Facebook parent Meta Platforms both declining more than 4%.

In the unpredictable world of cryptocurrency, bitcoin lost

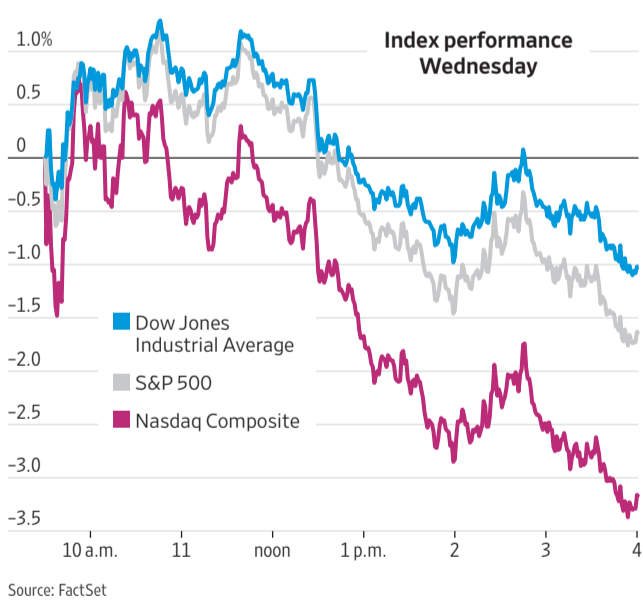
more ground and continued to trade more than 50% off of its all-time highs from last year.

"The bubble-type stocks will continue to unwind, and we're watching bitcoin closely," said Chris Senyek, chief investment strategist at Wolfe Research.

More speculative bets like investments in growth-oriented stocks and crypto have been slammed this year. Higher interest rates set by the Fed translate into greater returns on safe assets, dimming the appeal of far-off profits. The central bank lifted rates last week by half a percentage point, the biggest rise since 2000, and approved a plan to shrink its \$9 trillion asset portfolio, kicking into a higher gear its campaign to rein in 40-year-high inflation.

Adding to the uncertainty are the war in Ukraine, which propelled inflation higher by boosting commodity prices, and Covid-19 lockdowns in China that threaten to hurt the global economy.

"If we only had rising policy rates, or only had high inflation, or only had China or only had Ukraine, we could probably manage that," said Daniel Morris, chief market strategist



at BNP Paribas Asset Management. "But we've got all that simultaneously."

Aoifinn Devitt, chief investment officer at investment-advisory firm Moneta, said she has been guiding clients toward investments grounded in the real economy, such as energy and infrastructure, because of those sectors' relative strength amid inflation.

Riskier corners of the market got little comfort on

Wednesday. Bitcoin's recent selloff, and a downbeat quarterly report Tuesday, contributed to declines for Coinbase Global. Its shares slid \$19.27, or 26%, to \$53.72 after the cryptocurrency exchange said its users declined from the previous quarter.

Shares of Unity Software plunged \$17.83, or 37%, to \$30.30 after the videogaming-software developer widened its loss and gave second-

quarter revenue guidance below analysts' expectations.

Kohl's stock fell \$2.74, or 5.6% to \$46.65 as shareholders rejected an activist investor's push to replace up to 10 directors as the retailer is exploring a potential sale. Switch rose \$2.79, or 9.1%, to \$33.54 after the computer-services company said it was being taken private by a consortium of investors.

On the other hand, strong earnings reports from some companies drove gains. Shares of Electronic Arts rose \$8.89, or 8%, to \$120.49 after the videogame company said revenue in the latest fiscal year rose 24% to \$6.99 billion. Doughnut chain Krispy Kreme logged a rise of 46 cents, or 3.8%, to \$12.67 after reporting net revenue jumped 16% in the three months through March.

Brent crude, the global benchmark, rose \$5.05 a barrel, or 4.9%, to settle at \$107.51 a barrel.

The Stoxx Europe 600 gained 1.7%, led by shares of auto and real-estate companies. Early Thursday, Japan's Nikkei 225 was down 0.8%, Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index was down 1.5% and the Shanghai Composite was down 0.3%. S&P 500 futures were up 0.4%.

CORRECTIONS & AMPLIFICATIONS

The last name of Trond Solberg, an executive at Norwegian risk-management company DNV, was misspelled as Solbert in an April 26 Ukraine Crisis article about cyberattacks against European wind-energy companies. Also, DNV's name was given incorrectly as DNV GL, its former name.

Peter Grant was one of two reporters who contributed to a

Business & Finance article on Wednesday about Prologis Inc.'s offer to buy Duke Realty Corp. Mr. Grant's byline was omitted.

Talen Energy Corp.'s Susquehanna nuclear plant is located in Berwick, Pa. A Business News article on Wednesday about the power-plant company's bankruptcy filing incorrectly said the plant is

based in Susquehanna, Pa.

Part of the name of law firm Willkie Farr & Gallagher was misspelled as Wilkie in a Heard on the Street column on Saturday about clean energy.

The cotton in slub T-shirts is irregularly knit. An Off Duty article on Saturday about white T-shirts incorrectly said it is irregularly woven.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
 (USPS 664-880) (Eastern Edition ISSN 0099-9660)
 (Central Edition ISSN 1092-0935) (Western Edition ISSN 0193-2241)

Editorial and publication headquarters: 1211 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10036
 Published daily except Sundays and general legal holidays.
 Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and other mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Wall Street Journal, 200 Burnett Rd., Chicopee, MA 01020.

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Groceries, Air Travel Cost More In April

By GABRIEL T. RUBIN

Americans paid less for gasoline but more for groceries and air travel last month as the broader pace of inflation eased slightly but remained high.

A fall in energy costs led the way toward the smaller overall gain, with gasoline prices dropping a seasonally adjusted 6.1% in April, following a steep advance in crude-oil prices in March after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Groceries rose 1% over March and were up 10.8% over the past 12 months, the largest 12-month increase since November 1980, the Labor Department said.

Broadly, many price categories continued to show monthly increases, and overall prices rose 0.3% over the prior month, though the pace of increases eased to 8.3% in April from 8.5% in March, on an annual basis.

Below are a few of the categories that saw significant price increases, and ones where prices have retreated from recent highs.

Gasoline

Despite the monthly decline, gasoline prices were up 43.6% over the past 12 months, a jolt stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Crude-oil prices have continued to rise as the European Union considers a ban on Russian oil, a move that would continue to shrink the global supply.

Overall energy costs, including electricity and natural gas, dropped 2.7% on the month, in April, and rose 30.3% over the year.

Groceries

The April increase in grocery prices was somewhat slower than the 1.5% gain in March. Still, it marked the fourth straight month grocery prices increased by at least 1%. Dairy prices, led by milk, shot up in April by 2.5%, while fruits and vegetables saw modest price declines.

Travel and Shelter

As Americans travel again, airfares increased 18.6% in April, the largest single month increase since records began in 1963. They are up by 33% over the past year. The cost of lodging at hotels and motels rose 2% in April after advancing 3.7% in March.

New, Used Vehicles

Prices for new and used cars are moving in opposite directions as the shortages on used car lots ease somewhat, but supply-chain headaches and limited availability of crucial components like semiconductors hurt production of new vehicles, forcing auto makers to warn of elevated prices and limited availability at least through the rest of 2022.

Prices for new cars rose by 1.1% in April, accelerating from a 0.2% rise in March. But prices for used cars and trucks fell by 0.4% in April, a third straight month of declines after a long period of steady increases throughout the pandemic. From a year earlier, used car prices were up 22.7% and new vehicles cost 13.2% more.

U.S. NEWS

Overdose Deaths Hit Record Last Year

By JON KAMP

Drug-overdose deaths in 2021 topped 100,000 for the first time in a calendar year, federal data showed, a record high fueled by the spread of illicit forms of fentanyl throughout the country.

More than 107,000 people in the U.S. died from drug overdoses last year, preliminary Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data released Wednesday showed, roughly a 15% increase from 2020. The proliferation of the potent synthetic opioid fentanyl has been compounded by the destabilizing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on users and people in recovery, according to health authorities and treatment providers.

The U.S. has recorded more than one million overdose deaths since 2000, and more than half of those came in the past seven years.

"We've never seen anything like this," said Robert Anderson, chief of the mortality-statistics branch at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics, regarding fentanyl's impact on the numbers.

The agency has counted about 103,600 overdoses for 2021 but believes the number is several thousand higher due to suspected overdoses that haven't yet been confirmed by local death investigators, Dr. Anderson said.

Fentanyl, a drug up to 50 times the strength of heroin, has raised risks for drug users. There is a legal form, sometimes prescribed for managing cancer pain, but the main problems are illicit forms made in clandestine labs in Mexico, according to U.S. law-enforcement authorities. These cartels made drugs then enter the U.S., often hidden in vehicles crossing border checkpoints.

The drug is attractive to cartels because it is synthetic, made from easily sourced chemicals rather than relying on crops, like the poppies used to make heroin. U.S. deaths linked to heroin have been declining as fentanyl's profile rises. But deaths linked to synthetic opioids, a category largely made up by fentanyl, climbed 23% last year to about 71,200 while representing about two-thirds of all drug deaths, the preliminary CDC numbers show.

The agency also noted rising fatalities linked to two stimulants—methamphetamine and cocaine—which researchers say people are often intentionally using alongside fentanyl. Deadly overdoses in a category that includes mostly meth rose 34% to nearly 33,000 while cocaine-linked deaths increased 23% to about 24,500. These deaths often overlap with the opioid count in the CDC data.

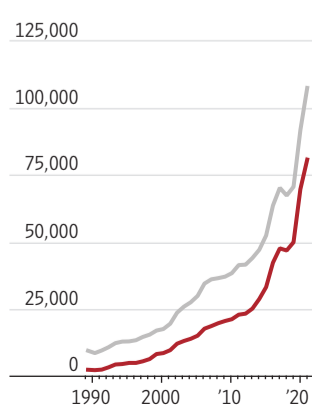
Some activists consider fentanyl-related deaths to be poisonings, especially when the users don't realize they are taking the drug. This can sometimes happen when people use fake, fentanyl-laced pills made to look like less powerful prescription opioids and are flooding into the U.S.

The diversifying fentanyl market—from its expanding geographic reach to its appearance mixed with stimulants and fake pills—makes it difficult to see the end of the crisis, said Nora Volkow, director at the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

"I do believe that there has to be a ceiling," she said. "But I do not know that we've achieved this."

Overdose deaths reach a new annual record.

■ All drug deaths
■ Opioid-related drug deaths



Note: 2021 numbers are provisional
Source: CDC

Deal Reached in Condo-Collapse Suit

By LAURA KUSISTO

Relatives of victims of the 2021 condo tower collapse in Surfside, Fla., have reached a proposed \$997 million settlement to resolve wrongful-death claims against defendants sued over the building's failure.

The payout, announced in a court hearing Wednesday, would settle claims brought by family members of the 98 victims of the collapse of Champlain Towers South last June.

Defendants in the case included the building's insurers, developers of a neighboring condo building, an engineering firm that warned of the tower's structural issues before its collapse and others.

The settlement is much higher than most lawyers initially expected. The initial pool of insurance money to settle both claims for victims who lost their homes and those who lost family members was \$50 million.



An aerial view earlier this month of the cleared lot where the 12-story Champlain Towers South condo building once stood.

Earlier this spring, condo plaintiffs settled their property-damage claims for about \$83 million.

The case was settled on an unusually tight timeline. Circuit Court Judge Michael Hanzman in Miami had said he

wanted the litigation to be resolved within a year, an accelerated timeline for class-action lawsuits, which can take years to resolve. The judge said he wanted the insurance proceeds to go to the victims rather than be gobbled up in

legal fees from protracted litigation.

"It was as difficult a case as one gets," Judge Hanzman said during Wednesday's hearing. "For results like this to happen a lot of things have to break your way."

The judge will have to approve the settlement for it to become final.

The 40-year-old building with some 136 apartments collapsed in the early morning hours when many residents were asleep. It is a rare event for a building to collapse with no clear trigger, such as an earthquake, and it raised troubling questions about the country's aging condo buildings.

Plaintiff attorneys had said it would take close to \$1 billion to compensate all the victims fairly based on the value of the units lost, which ranged from about \$400,000 to about \$2.9 million, compensation for trauma and potential punitive damages a jury might award. But attorneys said they were unlikely to reach that number

unless they could bring in a deep-pocketed defendant.

As the linchpin of that effort, surviving residents and victims' families sued the developers of the neighboring luxury condo, Eighty Seven Park, in November, alleging that the nearby construction destabilized the building and helped lead to the collapse.

Attorneys at the hearing didn't disclose the breakdown of how much individual defendants were paying as part of the settlement.

Michael Thomas, an attorney for the development team behind Eighty Seven Park, said the building's development "in no way caused or contributed to the collapse of Champlain Towers South."

"Hopefully, ending this litigation will help bring some closure to the survivors of this tragic event," he said.

Separately, the land on which the collapsed condo building once stood is expected to be sold for somewhere upward of \$100 million.

Offshore Wind Energy Collides With Fishing

By JENNIFER HILLER
AND KATY STECH FEREC

The Biden administration's plans to develop wind power off the East Coast are drawing concerns from the fishing industry, in the latest example of climate policy colliding with the livelihood of coastal businesses.

The Interior Department on Wednesday auctioned off the rights to develop a 110,000-acre site off the Carolinas to two bidders: affiliates of France's TotalEnergies SE and North Carolina-based utility Duke Energy Corp. The companies won the auction with separate bids that amount to \$315 million.

Commercial and recreational fishing businesses have raised concerns about the offshore projects, though the charter industry could see the biggest effects. Some areas opened up for development off the Carolina coast are home to an ancient reef and old shipwrecks that support scores of species of fish popular with recreational anglers, including bluefin tuna, mackerel, snapper and grouper.

"It's just our crème de la crème," said Cane Faircloth, president of the North Carolina Captain For-Hire Association and a fifth-generation fisherman based in Holden, N.C. "I don't understand why they picked that spot."

The site near the Carolinas is nearly the size of eight Manhattan islands about 20 miles offshore. It has the potential to generate more than 1.3 gigawatts of energy at full capacity within 10 years, enough to power half a million homes—roughly the population of Raleigh, N.C.



Cane Faircloth pilots his boat off Holden Beach, N.C., where fishing would be affected by wind power.

The auction is part of President Biden's goal of bringing online 30 gigawatts of offshore wind power by 2030 in a bid to cut greenhouse-gas emissions from electricity generation. Sixteen bidders, including affiliates of Avangrid Inc., Ørsted A/S, Shell PLC and Invenery LLC, had been cleared by U.S. officials to participate.

A February sale of offshore wind parcels near New York and New Jersey generated a record \$4.37 billion, but the Carolinas auction hadn't been expected to climb as high, said Timothy Fox, vice president and research analyst at research company ClearView Energy Partners LLC.

Unlike those states, North

Carolina hasn't set explicit targets for purchasing offshore wind power. Wind speeds are also weaker near southern Atlantic states.

Erik Milito, president of the National Ocean Industries Association, which represents offshore energy projects, said auction results show that "the Carolinas are positioned to be the next American offshore wind hub." "We're seeing the maturation of the market and an optimistic outlook for offshore wind in areas beyond our Northeastern states," he said.

The auction win marks Duke's entry into offshore wind. TotalEnergies was a winning bidder in the February auction off the New York

and New Jersey coasts and has said it plans to participate in a California auction this year.

Duke said it could begin producing power at the site between 2030 and 2032. "We look forward to listening and learning from diverse stakeholders and community members in the region to ensure we are being thoughtful about all aspects of the potential project," said Stephen De May, Duke's North Carolina president.

Total didn't immediately respond to requests for comment late Wednesday.

Interior officials say they are aware of the fishing industry's concerns and are working on regulatory guidance that would lay out how wind farm

developers can minimize harm to commercial and recreational fishing, while compensating businesses for losses.

More lease sales are planned in the next two years for regions off the coast of California, the central Atlantic region and in the Gulf of Mexico.

Without federal guidance, offshore wind developers have carved out their own settlements with local fishing groups.

Developers behind the \$2.8 billion Vineyard Wind project off the Massachusetts coast, scheduled to begin operating next year, made roughly \$40 million available for the industry. In permitting documents, they said they expect commercial fishing businesses to abandon the 75,000-acre area because it will be too hard to navigate. They projected the industry's income loss at \$14 million over 30 years.

Glenn Skinner, executive director of the North Carolina Fisheries Association, which represents commercial and recreational charter businesses, said his members could have to take longer trips to avoid the wind farms, raising fuel costs, or end up with lighter catches and fewer customers because fish are less abundant.

The American Clean Power Association, a Washington, D.C., trade group that represents the wind, solar and electricity storage industries, has said that compensation for fisheries should cover navigation system upgrades, new fishing boats or other gear, but the funds should come from money raised from the government's lease sales or other operating fees.

Court Rules Against Age Limit On Semiautomatic Rifle Sales

By JACOB GERSHMAN

A divided federal appeals court ruled Wednesday that a California law banning the sale of semiautomatic rifles to adults under 21 years old conflicts with the constitutional right to bear arms.

A three-judge panel of the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals found that California's ban on semiautomatic rifle sales to young adults burdens their Second Amendment right to defend themselves in the home.

The decision was the first of its kind by a federal appeals court, delivering a victory to gun-rights advocates at a time when the scope of the Second Amendment is under review by the Supreme Court.

"America would not exist without the heroism of the young adults who fought and died in our revolutionary army," wrote Judge Ryan D. Nelson, a President Donald Trump appointee, in the opening line of Wednesday's opinion. "Today we reaffirm that our Constitution still protects the right that enabled their sacrifice: the right of young adults to keep and bear arms."

The decision reversed a ruling by U.S. District Judge M. James Lorenz in San Diego, an appointee of President Bill Clinton who declined to stop

the law's enforcement.

California's current age-based restrictions date to 2019, when state Democratic lawmakers and Gov. Gavin Newsom passed a new measure prompted in part by an attack on a synagogue outside San Diego perpetrated by a 19-year-old man who opened fire with an AR-15 style semiautomatic rifle, killing one person and injuring three.

It was among a wave of gun restrictions that California and other states enacted after a rash of mass shootings in recent years. The age limits

California law conflicts with right to bear arms, say appellate judges.

banned the sale of most semiautomatic rifles to adults under 21, exempting law-enforcement officers or active-duty members of the Armed Forces.

The ban didn't apply to shotguns or to certain less powerful long guns, which young adults could acquire as long as the buyer held a valid, unexpired hunting license, a requirement that passed muster with the Ninth Circuit.

Several young adults, gun shops and gun-rights advocacy groups sued for an injunction against the age restraints.

The state argued that the restriction was justified, citing data showing that young adults are responsible for a disproportionate number of violent gun crimes and evidence that people under 21 are less mature.

Judge Kenneth K. Lee joined Judge Nelson's ruling. "If California can deny the Second Amendment right to young adults based on their group's disproportionate involvement in violent crimes, then the government can deny that right—as well as other rights—to other groups," Judge Lee wrote in a concurrence.

Sidney H. Stein, a visiting federal judge from New York temporarily assigned to the Ninth Circuit, dissented.

A Clinton appointee, he said lawyers representing California provided "substantial and substantiated justifications for its enactment of the semiautomatic rifle regulation."

A spokesman for California Attorney General Rob Bonta, a Democrat, said the office is reviewing the decision, and that it "remains committed to defending California's common sense gun laws."

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U.S. NEWS

Abortion-Rights Bill Fails in Senate

Women's Health Protection Act falls short of 60 votes needed to advance

By SIOBHAN HUGHES AND ELIZA COLLINS

WASHINGTON—Senate Democrats failed to advance a bill seeking to ensure women's access to abortion, in a vote designed to draw a clear contrast with Republicans ahead of a potential Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* looming just months before the midterm elections.

The vote was 49 in favor of 51 against, falling short of the 60 votes needed to advance the Women's Health Protection Act.

Democrats held the vote despite knowing it was certain to fail in the 50-50 Senate, where abortion stances split almost entirely along party lines. No Republicans supported the measure, and centrist Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin (D, W.Va.) had broken with his party and opposed the bill. But Democratic Party leaders saw the vote as a crucial political step with the prospect of the end of federal abortion protections now looming and the matter being turned over to states.

"I'm scared and I'm frightened for women in this country more than I ever have been before," said Sen. Patty Murray (D, Wash.) shortly before the vote. If some states ban abortions, voters "live with the painful consequences of that decision and they will not forget Republicans are the ones responsible."

Republicans said that if *Roe* falls, states should be in charge of making decisions that affect their own residents.

"I hope what the Supreme Court does is sends this issue back to the people to debate it and weigh in and to make their decisions through their multiple elected representatives," said Sen. John Kennedy (R., La.).



Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin, pictured Wednesday, broke with his party and opposed the bill. No Republican supported the measure.

A day earlier, Sen. Bob Casey (D., Pa.), a self-described pro-life Democrat, said he would back his party's measure to affirm the right to terminate a pregnancy before fetal viability. That marked a shift in his position and left Mr. Manchin as the only Democrat to oppose the bill. Mr. Manchin said Wednesday that he would support codifying *Roe* in law but the party's proposal goes too far.

The bill "is not *Roe v. Wade* codification, it's an expansion," he said.

Abortion access moved to the center of the capital's political debate last week after Politico published a leaked draft opinion that suggested the Supreme Court was prepared to throw out precedent establishing a constitutional right to abortion. The court is considering a Mississippi law that banned abortions at 15 weeks of pregnancy. The court is expected to is-

sue its opinion in late June or early July.

Each party has painted the other as holding extreme views that are out of step with the public's. Democrats say Republicans are seeking to ban all abortions, even early in a pregnancy or in cases of rape or incest. GOP lawmakers, meanwhile, say Democrats would favor rules allowing abortions to be performed any time before birth, and many argue the matter should be left to the states.

If *Roe* were to be overturned, many states have laws that could ban all or nearly all abortions, including some so-called trigger laws that would go into effect either automatically or with quick state action. Other states have passed laws protecting abortion access.

The Democrats' bill ensures access to an abortion until a fetus is viable, usually around 23 to 24 weeks, and would override state laws currently

in place that impose restrictions at earlier dates. The bill would allow abortions after viability when a healthcare provider determines the pregnancy would pose a risk to the patient's life or health.

Republicans say that language gives such wide latitude that a provider could offer a late-term abortion to protect a woman's mental health. Among their other concerns is that viability could be determined by the doctor or other provider, and the bill specifically overrides any conflicting state laws that impose restrictions.

"It's important that we come up with a reasonable bill," said centrist Sen. Susan Collins (R., Maine), who said she has been discussing a compromise approach with Sen. Tim Kaine (D., Va.).

Ms. Collins, who backs *Roe*, has proposed banning states from imposing an "undue burden" on a woman's ability to terminate a pregnancy before

fetal viability, and allowing states to impose restrictions after the fetus is viable unless ending the pregnancy is necessary to protect a woman's life. That approach is designed to lock in the status quo because the "undue burden" standard is part of current Supreme Court precedent that arose from a 1992 opinion.

Mr. Kaine said that he approached Ms. Collins over the weekend about a possible compromise, and that while he supported the Women's Health Protection Act, its failure to advance on Wednesday couldn't be the last word. "This cannot be one and done," he said.

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D., N.H.) said that a discussion with Ms. Collins is worthwhile but that Democrats still wouldn't be able to come up with 60 votes to defeat a Republican filibuster. "People are very upset," she said.

—Andrew Duehren contributed to this article.

Bedoya Narrowly Confirmed For FTC

By John D. McKinnon

WASHINGTON—The Senate confirmed law professor Alvaro Bedoya to the Federal Trade Commission on Wednesday, giving Democrats a 3-2 majority and potentially energizing the agency's scrutiny of large technology companies.

The Senate voted 51 to 50 along party lines to approve President Biden's long-delayed pick, who originally was nominated last year. Vice President Kamala Harris cast the deciding vote as the Senate's presiding officer.

Confirmation of Mr. Bedoya gives FTC Chairwoman Lina Khan the Democratic majority that would help her advance an agenda that includes challenging more corporate mergers and adopting regulations to head off what she sees as unfair business tactics.

Much of that agenda focuses on tech companies' conduct. With Mr. Bedoya's confirmation to the board, the FTC is expected to try to adopt first-ever comprehensive online privacy regulations for tech companies, as well as rules for industry competition. The agency also could pursue new enforcement cases against individual companies.

The agency's announced plans have led to stepped-up business lobbying to block or delay FTC action. They also have stirred opposition to Mr. Bedoya's nomination from Republicans.

Mr. Bedoya, a former Senate staffer, was originally nominated by Mr. Biden in September. His academic work at Georgetown University has focused on how technology can disadvantage members of minority groups.

Republicans say that Mr. Bedoya's comments on social media, including characterizing former President Donald Trump as a racist, show him to be a Democratic partisan who would further polarize the FTC. In one 2018 tweet, Mr. Bedoya wrote: "What ELSE does Trump have to say for the media to expressly call him a racist and white supremacist?"

Mr. Bedoya, in his Senate confirmation hearing, pledged as an FTC commissioner "to set aside all those politics and serve every single person in the country, irrespective of political opinion and party."

Republicans' opposition in the Senate Commerce Committee blocked him from coming to a floor vote. Democrats eventually had to employ a maneuver known as a discharge petition to remove his nomination from the committee and bring it to the floor.

Surplus Reached Record \$308 Billion in April

By Andrew Duehren

WASHINGTON—Federal revenue almost doubled in April compared with a year earlier, reaching a record and driving a monthly government surplus of \$308 billion, which Treasury officials said also set a record for the largest monthly surplus.

Government revenue from taxes and other receipts for the month rose 97% from a year earlier to \$864 billion, not adjusting for calendar differences, the Treasury Department reported Wednesday. Federal outlays in April fell 16% to \$555 billion, the Treasury said, reflecting a decline in pandemic-related spending.

Still, the federal government spent 32% more on servicing its debt in April compared with a year earlier as persistently high inflation pushed borrowing costs higher.

Higher tax receipts reflect strong job growth and a broader economic recovery since a brief recession in 2020 that has fueled wage increases in recent years. Meanwhile, government spending declined as much of the trillions in pandemic aid receded from the economy.

April's \$308 billion surplus was the largest recorded in a single month on record, Treasury officials said. Surplus and deficit amounts aren't infla-

tion-adjusted. It is only the second monthly surplus recorded since 2019.

Historically, it is common for the government to record a surplus in April, the month when many Americans pay their tax bills, but the government delayed the deadline for tax payments in 2020 and 2021 to later in the year. The second-highest level of monthly government revenue came in July 2020, when tax filings were due and government receipts came in at \$564 billion, according to Treasury officials.

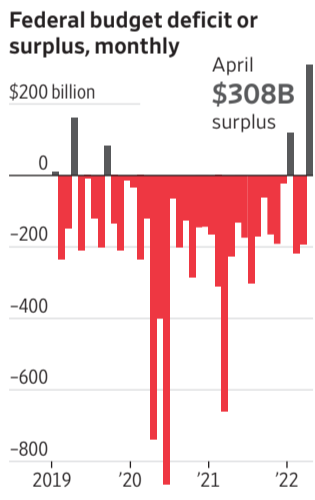
The combination of lower spending and higher revenue has led to a precipitous drop in the deficit from its pan-

demically-fueled highs, a trend that the White House has repeatedly touted. Over the first seven months of this fiscal year, the deficit has dropped by roughly \$1.5 trillion as compared with the same period last year.

The nearly \$3 trillion in revenue the government has brought in so far this fiscal year is also a record, according to Treasury officials.

In a speech Tuesday, President Biden said the decline in the deficit could help ease inflation, which ran at an 8.3% annual rate in April, based on the consumer-price index.

—Anthony DeBarros contributed to this article.



Source: Treasury Department via St. Louis Federal Reserve



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Judge Blocks Florida's Congressional Map

By Arian Campo-Flores

A Florida judge blocked a congressional map approved by Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis because it broke up a plurality Black district in the northern part of the state.

"I am finding that the enacted map is unconstitutional...because it diminishes African-Americans' ability to elect the representative of their choice," said Judge J. Layne Smith of the Second Judicial Circuit in Tallahassee during a video hearing on Wednesday.

Judge Smith said he planned to issue a written order formalizing his ruling on Thursday or Friday. He expected that the state would appeal his decision, he said, and that an appellate court or the Florida Supreme Court would have the final say.

"We will undoubtedly be appealing his ruling and are confident the constitutional map enacted by the Florida Legislature and signed into law passes legal muster," said Taryn Fenske, the governor's communications director. "We look forward to defending it."

Mr. DeSantis signed into law the new congressional map in April after a contentious process with state lawmakers. The month before, he vetoed a map created by the Republican-controlled Legislature, saying lawmakers created a racial gerrymander by trying

to draw a district focused on Black voters in northern Florida. That map likely would have added two Republican seats to the state's House delegation, according to the Cook Political Report.

In a special legislative session convened by Mr. DeSantis in April, lawmakers approved a map proposed by the governor that was expected to add four Republican seats. The move drew protests from

Democratic lawmakers on the state House floor.

One of the most significant changes in Mr. DeSantis's map was the dismantling of the plurality Black Fifth Congressional District, which extends from Jacksonville in the east to Tallahassee in the west. It is currently represented by Rep. Al Lawson, a Black Democrat.

Shortly after Mr. DeSantis approved the map, several organizations, including the

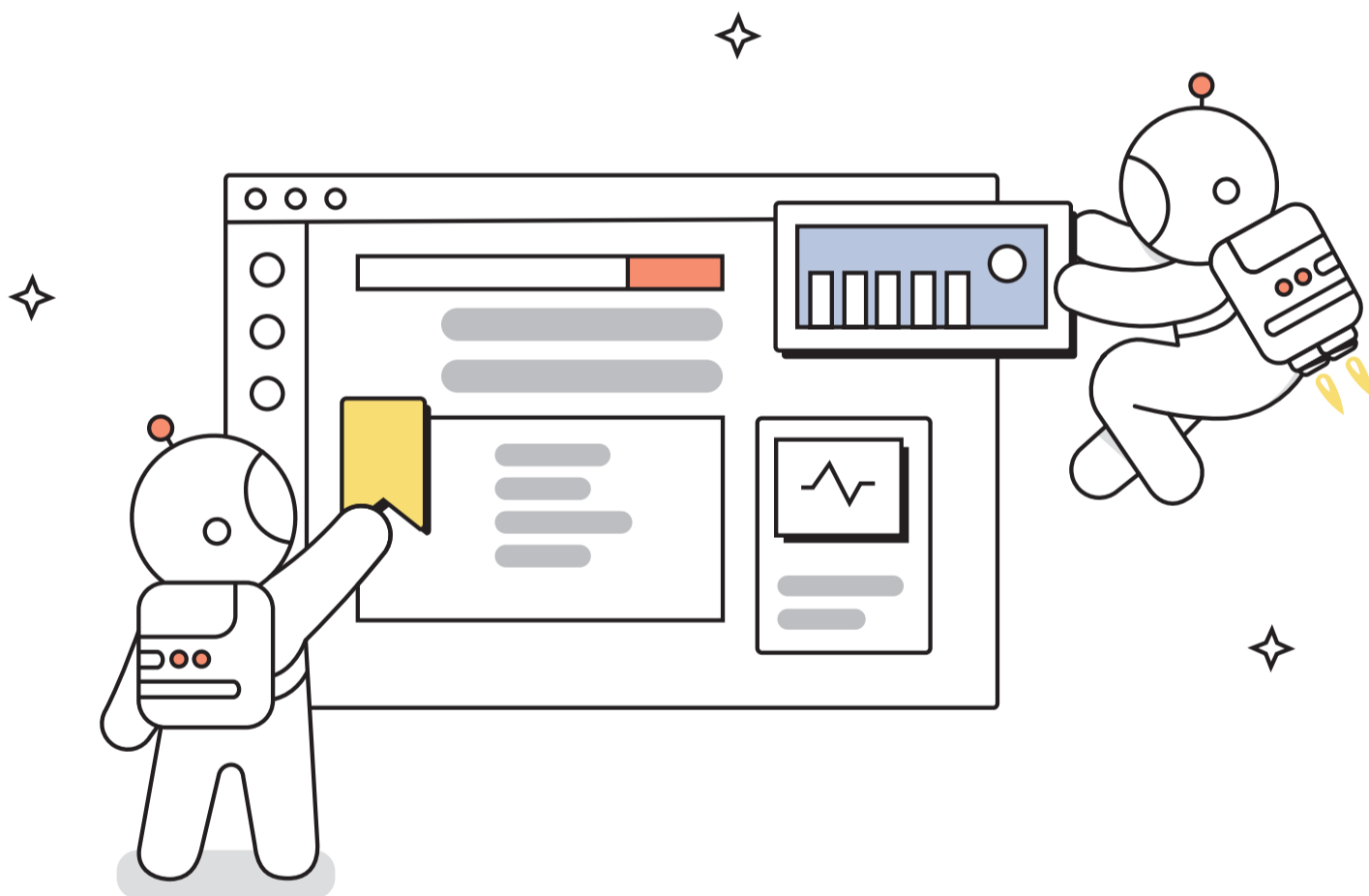
League of Women Voters of Florida, filed a lawsuit challenging the map. They argued that it violated a 2010 "Fair Districts" amendment to the Florida Constitution that prohibited drawing of districts that denies racial minorities equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice.

In his remarks during the hearing on Wednesday, Judge Smith said the map likely violated that amendment.



Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law the new congressional map in April after a contentious process.

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U.S. NEWS



THREAT: Firefighters near a wildfire in the Calf Canyon/Hermits Peak area of New Mexico

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

Burial-Site Evidence Found at 53 Schools

An investigation by the Interior Department found evidence of burial sites at 53 defunct boarding schools for Native American children, according to a government report.

The investigation is the broadest official accounting of how many Native children died while attending the institutions. The government operated or assisted some 408 such schools.

—Dan Frosch

FEDERAL RESERVE

Dallas Fed Names Logan as President

Lorie Logan, who manages the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's massive holdings of securities and cash, will be the new president and chief executive of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Ms. Logan, 49, will take over the slot vacated by Robert Kaplan this past September. The Dallas Fed said Ms. Logan will start at the bank on Aug. 22.

—Michael S. Derby

NEW YORK

Judge Lifts Trump Contempt for Now

A New York judge said he was lifting an order finding Donald Trump in contempt of court, so long as the former president pays \$110,000 in fines by next week.

State Supreme Court Justice Arthur Engoron said that by May 20, Mr. Trump must pay the fine and submit additional affidavits about his efforts to comply with a subpoena from New York Attorney General Letitia James.

—Corinne Ramey

Court Clears Texas Law Regulating Social Media

By JACOB GERSHMAN

A federal appeals court ruled Wednesday that Texas for now can enforce a law that prohibits the internet's biggest social-media platforms from suppressing users' content based on the viewpoint of their speech.

Texas Republicans enacted the social-media law last year, saying they were striking back against what they view as Silicon Valley's stifling of conservative views on Facebook, Twitter and other platforms.

Trade groups representing tech giants sued to challenge the law, arguing it was a brazen and unconstitutional attack on their own freedom of speech. The industry warned that the law would flood their platforms with hate speech, dangerous medical misinformation, terrorist propaganda and foreign government disinformation.

A federal district judge in Austin last December held that social media platforms have a First Amendment right to moderate content disseminated on their platforms and issued a preliminary injunction that blocked the state from enforcing the law, known as HB 20.

On Wednesday, though, a three-judge panel of the New Orleans-based Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued a stay order that allowed Texas to begin enforcing the law while the state's appeal continues.

The panel, on a 2-1 vote, sided with the state in a one-page order that didn't explain the reasons for the ruling.

All three judges on the panel were appointed by Republican presidents, while the judge that originally sided with the tech industry was appointed by President Barack Obama.

Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton tweeted that HB 20 "is back in effect," saying the Fifth Circuit "made the right call here."

"This unexplained order contravenes established First Amendment law," tweeted Matt Schruers, president of the Computer & Communications Industry Association in

response to the ruling. The group co-filed the lawsuit against HB 20 with NetChoice, another trade organization.

The Texas regulations make it unlawful for social media platforms with at least 50 million monthly active users to censor users based on their viewpoint, applying to sites like Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Twitter, Vimeo, WhatsApp and YouTube. It does not apply to internet service providers, email providers and news sites, nor to content that incites criminal activity.

The law allows Texas residents, or anyone doing business in the state, to sue platforms for violations.

Social media companies have come under fire from both conservative activists and free-speech advocates, including potential Twitter owner Elon Musk, who say Americans have been muzzled on platforms that operate essentially as public squares.

Social-media platforms have said they don't discriminate based on users' views.

Disney+ Subscribers Surge

Continued from Page One

cents a share, for the second quarter, down from \$901 million, or 49 cents a share, a year earlier. Adjusted earnings were \$1.08 a share, below analysts' expectations of \$1.19. Revenue for the quarter was \$19.25 billion, compared with \$15.61 billion a year earlier.

Disney launched the new Marvel Studios series "Moon Knight" earlier this year, and Mr. Chapek highlighted what he described as popular offerings among the more mature entertainment content on Disney's

Hulu platform, such as reality show "The Kardashians."

Despite the better-than-anticipated subscriber growth, Disney saw losses widen dramatically at its direct-to-consumer segments, which also include the general entertainment streaming platform Hulu and streaming sports network ESPN+. Operating losses grew to \$887 million in the quarter, compared with \$290 million in the same period one year ago.

In a conference call, analysts pressed Mr. Chapek about the high cost of acquiring new customers to Disney's streaming platforms. Spending on programming, production and marketing on content rose in the quarter, Mr. Chapek said, with about one-third of Disney's \$32 billion content budget this year devoted to acquiring sports rights.

One big driver of subscrip-

tions this quarter was viewers of Indian Premier League cricket matches, which resumed in March. Christine McCarthy, the company's chief financial officer, said that about half of the 7.9 million net new subscriptions it added came from subscribers to Disney+ Hotstar, its Indian streaming service. Disney+ Hotstar customers account for about 50 million of the total Disney+ subscriptions.

Before Wednesday's report, Disney shares were trading at two-year lows, and had fallen more than 30% so far this year. The reasons for Disney's nose-dive have been threefold, analysts said: fears of a looming recession, overall stock market volatility and worries about the profitability of streaming.

For the first year and a half of the coronavirus pandemic, the streaming video business model was the toast of Wall

Street. Then last month, Netflix reported its first net subscriber loss in a decade, with some 200,000 customers pulling the plug. Those results sent Netflix shares declining by nearly 50%, erasing nearly \$80 billion in market value at the world's biggest streamer and putting pressure on the shares of Netflix's streaming competitors.

Disney, which launched its flagship streaming platform Disney+ just months before the pandemic hit, has reaped the fruits of streaming to the sofa-bound as well. The shift helped make up for Covid-19-related closures at its theme parks, which had been the best performing division of the company and have rebounded.

But the company's emphasis on its streaming business could become a pressure point as consumers shift their behaviors amid high inflation and more

options of where to spend their entertainment budgets, investors and analysts said.

Sales at its theme parks and consumer products division—which includes Walt Disney World and Disneyland resorts—logged \$6.65 billion in the quarter ended April 2, above analysts' expectations of \$6.29 billion.

"The reason you own Disney, first and foremost, is the parks business," said Markus Hansen, a portfolio manager at Vontobel Asset Management, which owns Disney shares. "The obsession of the markets with streaming is a product of Covid. The parks, the bread and butter of the business, were shut down."

Disney leadership wasn't asked any questions Wednesday about the Florida Legislature's recent repeal of a special tax privileges district that houses the Walt Disney World theme

park. The district owes \$1 billion in municipal debt, which is now entangled in a legal mess over how bondholders will be paid back.

The bill repealing the tax treatment came amid controversy over Disney's response to Florida's Parental Rights in Education Bill, signed into law last month, which prohibits instruction in schools on sexual orientation or gender identity from kindergarten to third grade. It limits instruction on those topics for older children to material deemed "age-appropriate."

Mr. Chapek initially chose to stay mum about what opponents call the "Don't Say Gay" bill, but after pressure from some employees and critics, vowed to fight against the legislation and similar measures in other states.

—Denny Jacob contributed to this article.

WSJ+

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THE UKRAINE CRISIS

Russian Soldier Faces War-Crime Charges

The 21-year-old would be the first to stand trial in Ukraine, and face life in prison if convicted

BY MAURO ORRU
AND MATTHEW LUXMOORE

A Russian soldier in Ukrainian custody will be the first to stand trial on war-crimes charges, Ukraine's prosecutor-general said Wednesday, after an investigation alleged he fatally shot at an unarmed 62-year-old man near his home in northeastern Ukraine.

Ukraine's Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova said her office filed an indictment on charges of violating the laws and customs of war against the 21-year-old tank-division commander, identified as Vadim Shishimarin. He could face life imprisonment.

Mr. Shishimarin is accused of firing several shots at the head of a man, who died on the spot, Ms. Venediktova said.

Ukrainian investigators have raced to collect evidence of purported atrocities committed by Russian troops against civilians during the war, and have said they would pursue war-crimes cases in domestic courts.

Moscow has denied committing war crimes or targeting civilians. It made no comment on the charges.

The prosecutor general didn't say how Mr. Shishimarin was detained or provide details of the evidence against him.

Ms. Venediktova told The Wall Street Journal on May 6 that her office identified about 40 members of the Russian military who prosecutors suspect of war crimes. A few of the soldiers are in custody, she said.

Ukrainian authorities filed criminal charges last month against 10 Russian soldiers accused of taking civilians hos-



People transport their belongings, with destroyed facilities of Azovstal Iron and Steel Works in the background in the city of Mariupol.

tage and mistreating them in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha. Ukraine plans to adjudicate the those cases in its own courts before issuing international criminal-arrest warrants.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused Russia of war crimes after what Ukrainian officials have said was a Russian decision to target civilian populations as its military offensive encountered stiff Ukrainian resistance.

Wednesday's developments occurred as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed a security deal with Sweden and Finland pledging to support their militaries should they come under attack. The pacts call for more intelligence sharing, joint military training and bolstering security. Finland and Sweden have said they are considering joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

and will make a decision in the coming weeks.

Ukrainian officials, meanwhile, accused Russian troops in Ukraine of shipping grains and produce critical to the Ukrainian economy to Crimea, adding to their list of grievances against occupying forces, as local pro-Russian officials called for incorporation into Russia.

The military administration of the Zaporizhzhia region said that a column of Russian trucks loaded with Ukrainian grain left the occupied town of Enerhodar on Tuesday with a Russian military escort. They said it was bound for the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. The administration also said that vegetables and sunflower seeds are being taken.

Ukraine and most of the international community regard Crimea as occupied Ukrainian

territory. Ukraine provides about 10% of global wheat exports, 14% of corn exports, and roughly half of the world's sunflower oil, says the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Kremlin and the Russian Ministry of Defense didn't respond to requests to comment.

Authorities in the Russian-occupied southern Ukrainian region of Kherson, of strategic importance for its access to the Black Sea, plan to submit a request to Moscow to be formally accepted as part of Russia, a Kremlin-aligned official said Wednesday.

The development comes months after Moscow recognized the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk republics.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said residents of the Kherson region would have to decide their own fate.

In response, Mykhailo Pod-

olyak, a Zelensky adviser, said that the only request pro-Russian officials in the Kherson region should be preparing was "for pardon after a court's verdict."

"The occupiers can ask to join even Mars or Jupiter. Ukraine's army will free Kherson, no matter which word games the occupiers come up with," he said in a Twitter post.

Ukraine says it isn't only vital produce that is being forcibly relocated to Russia, but also thousands of people living in the Russian-controlled breakaway states of eastern Ukraine and other locations occupied by Russian forces.

The head of Ukraine's Donetsk region, which Russia seeks full control over, has said that 30,000 people have been taken to Russia from Mariupol alone.

Russia denies forcing Ukrainians to leave their homes.

Biden Presses Congress On Turkish Weapons

BY JARED MALINS

WASHINGTON—The Biden administration has asked congressional leaders to approve the sale of advanced weapons and other equipment for Turkey's fleet of F-16 jet fighters, U.S. officials said, setting up a showdown with lawmakers over a proposal to sell more of the aircraft to Ankara as it seeks to recalibrate ties with Washington.

The proposed weapons sale, which was sent to congressional leaders last month, highlights how Turkey is hoping to leverage its role as a facilitator of Russia-Ukraine peace talks and its backing of the Ukrainian military as a way to repair frayed relations with Washington and obtain new weapons. The potential deal would include missiles, radar and electronics for Turkey's F-16s, representing a significant upgrade for the country's jet fighters.

Turkey has hosted two rounds of talks between Kyiv and Moscow, while supplying armed drones to Ukraine and barring some Russian warships from entering the Black Sea. Those moves have resulted in warming ties with Washington and more frequent contact with U.S. officials.

U.S. officials familiar with the request said the administration could be using the missile deal to gauge the level of support in Congress for a separate proposal to sell 40 new F-16s to Turkey, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally that has angered some officials in Washington over its ties to Russia.

U.S. and Turkish officials are advocating for the F-16 deal, arguing that it could help repair the American-Turkish defense relationship, which frayed after Ankara chose to buy a Russian air-defense system in 2017. Some U.S. lawmakers, including senior Dem-

A deal could help repair the American-Turkish defense relationship.

ocrats in both houses of Congress, oppose the sale, citing objections to Ankara's ties to Russia and concerns about human rights within Turkey.

The sale of AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, AIM-120 Amraam missiles, along with radar and other equipment would cost Turkey more than \$400 million, said an official familiar with the proposal. The administration made the request through an informal notification to key leaders in both houses of Congress. If congressional leaders clear the sale, the administration must by law send a formal notification of the deal.

The State Department "doesn't publicly confirm or comment on proposed defense transfers until they have been formally notified to Congress," a spokesman said. The Turkish Defense Ministry didn't respond to a request to comment.

The administration is expected to send a separate request to Congress involving the sale of a new fleet of F-16s along with upgrades for Turkey's existing aircraft later this year, following a request by Ankara last year.

Turkish and American officials have argued that the F-16 sale could help defuse years of tension between the two allies and prevent Turkey from drifting closer to Russia and China.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan approved the purchase of Russia's S-400 anti-aircraft system in 2017, triggering U.S. sanctions that resulted in Ankara being expelled from the advanced F-35 fighter program. The incident deepened distrust between Ankara and Washington, where officials are divided over U.S. support for Kurdish militants battling Islamic State in Syria and Turkey's clampdown on political opponents.

—Brett Forrest

contributed to this article.

Kyiv Cuts Supplies of Gas Flowing to Europe

BY JOE WALLACE
AND JENNY STRASBURG

Ukraine reduced flows of Russian natural gas through its territory to Europe, sending prices higher amid the continent's still-precarious reliance on Russian fossil fuels.

Within hours, though, enough gas was moving through an alternative route that prices fell back again, ending essentially flat on the day.

The continued flow suggested some gas had been rerouted to travel through a separate pipeline, analysts and traders said. It was unclear what actions the Russian and Ukrainian sides took in the episode, but the quick rerouting demonstrated the country's energy-grid flexibility despite the violence of the battlefield.

The reworked flows partly offset any lost exports to Europe. They also enabled Russia to continue piping its gas to its biggest customer, and collecting much-needed payments for that gas. Ukraine benefited, too: Kyiv continues to pocket millions of dollars a month in transit fees that Moscow has paid it through the course of the war.

European gas prices leapt early in the day when Ukraine's gas-transport company said it was shutting a portion of the gas that travels across its territory from Russia to Europe. The company that runs Ukraine's pipeline network halted the flow of gas through a major entry point in the east of the country on Wednesday, blaming interference by Russian troops with critical gas infrastructure.

The border crossing accounts for a third of Russian gas exports through Ukraine to Europe and feeds 3% of the European Union's gas consumption. An increase in flows of Russian gas through a separate section of pipeline in Ukraine-controlled territory near the city of Sumy partially offset the stoppage, limiting the rise in prices.

Europe has been shoring up its energy supplies ahead of a planned EU-wide embargo on Russian oil being hashed out this week. Some member states, especially Germany, have also scrambled to find alternative supplies of gas amid the threat of a potential severing of exports by Moscow. Despite these moves, Europe is still heavily reliant on Russian gas, some of which flows through Ukraine.

Ukrainian energy officials

say Russia appears to have avoided deliberate strikes on pipelines that bring revenue into Russia's bruised economy, though extensive damage to Ukraine's domestic gas network left millions of residents without fuel. Ukraine, for its part, earns transit fees from Moscow for shuttling Russian gas to customers in Europe.

Wednesday's cutoff at the Sokhranivka entry point, on the border between the Luhansk region of Donbas and Russia, marked the biggest interruption of gas supplies to date. It came as Russia continued to pursue its campaign to seize the Donbas area of eastern Ukraine.

Ukraine's pipeline operator on Tuesday said it was stopping the flow through Sokhranivka because it had lost control of Novoposkov, a gas-compressor

station close to the Russian border. Russian forces had interfered in the pipeline network in a way that endangered the stability of the broader system, the Gas Transmission Operator of Ukraine said.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Wednesday said Russia "has always reliably fulfilled and intends to fulfill contractual obligations." A spokeswoman for Russian energy giant Gazprom PJSC didn't respond to a request to comment. On Tuesday, a Gazprom spokesman said Ukrainian gas specialists had continued to work at Sokhranivka and Novoposkov and that it was impossible to pipe the gas through another entry point.

But gas flows appeared to switch around on Wednesday, analysts and traders said.

Interest in Bomb Shelters Grows in Poland

BY NANCY A. YOUSSEF
AND NATALIA OJEWKA

WARSAW, Poland—Up until Russia's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, no one had ever asked Radoslaw Sekunda, an engineer, to update one of the Soviet-era bomb shelters that pepper much of this city.

For the past three decades, bomb shelters weren't functional, but relics from the bygone Cold War-era when war seemed imminent. Now Mr. Sekunda, the head of Warsaw's Association of Engineers and Technical Construction, fields such calls regularly from Poles reopening the airtight doors and asking if they should update their bunkers so they could be used to protect against a Russian attack.

While local and U.S. officials have warned that Poland could be a future target of Russian aggression, the capital doesn't appear to be on a war footing. Rather, worries about a military conflict are expressed in quiet murmurs among Poles who contemplate potential hostilities.

A woman on a bus said she listened to a 40-minute podcast on what to eat if you are hiding in the forest, in case she had to flee Warsaw. An American living in Poland said he was building a water well in his backyard because "if you have water you have ev-



A resident turned his apartment building's shelter into his own private den.

everything."

Meanwhile, a building manager who holds the only key to his shelter says he is refusing to do any preparation. "I'm a rationalist, and I don't think they will invade," said Jan Grzywaczewski, who has lived in his Warsaw apartment building for 25 years and keeps the only key to the bare, dusty shelter at the bottom of his building. "Also, panic is the worst adviser," he added.

Immediately after World War II, Soviet-bloc nations built shelters to protect against a possible Western attack. Polish law required companies and municipalities to build bomb shelters in residential, industrial and administrative buildings. Each shelter had a thick metal door that often led to a smaller metal door and into a labyrinth of several rooms, including a bathroom. There are 39,892 shelters in

Poland, which can accommodate one million people, or less than 3% of the total population, according to a 2017 report by the chief of the State Fire Service. Sweden, by comparison, has 65,000 shelters, enough for 85% of its roughly 10 million residents, while Swiss law requires enough atomic shelters to hold each resident. Ukraine distributed online maps of shelters in the weeks leading up to the war.

THE UKRAINE CRISIS

After Russia Retreats, Ukrainians Come Home to Villages of Ruins

Russian forces shelled communities outside of Kyiv and then occupied them for several weeks before fleeing. Residents who left are filtering back and planning their next steps.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT BY RENA EFFENDI FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Irina Kovalenko, village of Zalissia

During the occupation, Irina Kovalenko, 72 years old, sheltered in a cellar with a few neighbors, while Russian soldiers parked a tank in her yard.

Ms. Kovalenko had evacuated from Zalissia on March 22 and returned on May 1. Much of her house was destroyed by shelling. She has been sleeping among the debris.



Lyudmila Zdorovetz, village of Zalissia

The home of Lyudmila Zdorovetz, Ms. Kovalenko's daughter, was deemed uninhabitable by inspectors in Zalissia, but Ms. Zdorovetz still comes every day to care for her two cows in a barn.

Ms. Zdorovetz's car, tractor and other farming equipment were destroyed in crossfire. Before the war, she lived with her husband and their two children in their home in Zalissia.



Katerina Ivanovna, village of Velyka Dymarka

Katerina Ivanovna, 73 years old, was at home in Velyka Dymarka with her grandson when a projectile landed on the roof. 'My legs are too weak, I could not evacuate,' she said. When another hit, 'it felt like my house jumped a meter above the ground,' she added.

After the missiles hit, Ms. Ivanovna said, she slept in her cellar for weeks.



Katerina Karenko, village of Velyka Dymarka

Residents of Velyka Dymarka dubbed this 'Armageddon Street' after homes and gardens were damaged by shelling and during the Russian occupation from March 13 to 31.

Katerina Karenko, 66, returned to visit her country home here, and was photographed cleaning debris from her garden.

Ms. Karenko's vegetable garden provides for her son's and daughter's families.



Yefrosinya Zemliak, village of Bogdanovka

Yevrosenia Zemliak, her son and his family live in Bogdanovka.

He is planning to plant a tree in a shell crater in their yard.

Ms. Zemliak is shown planting carrots by the burned building where Russians set up a temporary base and hospital during the occupation.

'We never knew this war would come, but it's here,' she said. 'War is war, but we need to eat. Nobody knows what the winter will bring.'



Vasily and Nadia Donskoy, village of Bogdanovka

Vasily Donskoy, 65, and his wife Nadia, 61, live across the street from Ms. Zemliak's home. They decided not to leave Bogdanovka during the Russian occupation from March 8 to 29 so they could care for Nadia's 83-year-old mother.

After Russian troops retreated, the Donskoy family said they discovered two freshly dug graves with human remains on their land and human limbs nearby, in the orchard. The head of Bogdanovka's village council said 10 civilians were killed and seven more have disappeared.

Mr. Donskoy is shown planting wheat, with the ruins of shelled homes behind him.



WORLD NEWS

China Inflation Rose Slightly in April

Prices were up 2.1%, the fastest pace in five months, as growth took a hit from Covid rules

By Stella Yifan Xie

HONG KONG—China's consumer inflation edged up in April and factory-gate price pressures remained elevated as Covid-19 lockdowns jammed logistics networks and the Ukraine war pushed up global energy prices.

China's consumer-price index in April was up 2.1% from a year earlier, official data showed Wednesday, the fastest pace in five months—accelerating from March's 1.5% and topping the 2% median forecast of economists polled by The Wall Street Journal.

The gain was led by increases in food and fuel prices because of the pandemic and a sustained run-up in global commodity prices, China's National Bureau of Statistics said.

The producer-price index, a gauge of factory-gate inflation, was up 8% in April from a year earlier, down from March's 8.3% but exceeding the economists' 7.8% forecast. China still imports significant volumes of



Customers shop for produce at a supermarket in Yunnan province.

crude oil and coal, whose prices have been pushed higher by geopolitical turbulence in Europe.

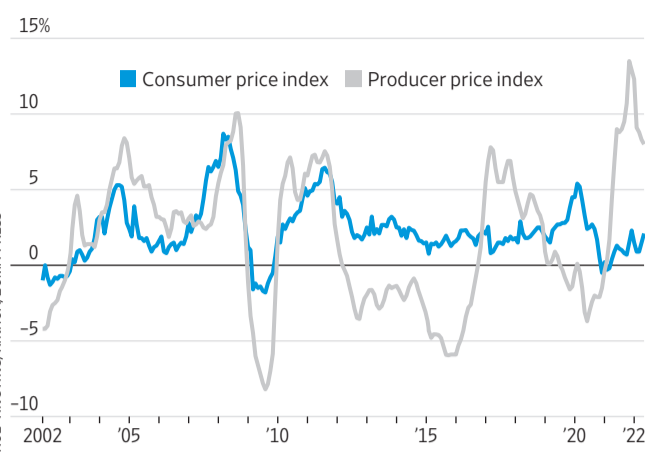
April's inflation figures add to evidence of the broader economic impact across China as Beijing doubles down on its zero-tolerance Covid containment policies, which have disrupted logistics networks, forced factories to halt production and prompted people across the country to stockpile groceries in anticipation of possible abrupt lockdowns.

Chinese authorities have long been on alert over the prospect of rising inflation, historically a source of political instability.

They may be especially eager to keep the economy stable this year, with President Xi Jinping set to break with recent precedent and secure a third term in power.

"As long as grain production and energy supply remain stable, inflation will be kept within a reasonable range," China's central-bank governor,

China's producer- and consumer-price indexes, change from a year earlier



Source: China's National Bureau of Statistics

Yi Gang, said in a speech last month. "Price stability is our policy priority."

Food prices in April were up 1.9% from a year earlier, led by rises of 24% and 14% in fresh vegetables and fruit, respectively.

Higher global energy prices, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, have begun to spill over into the lives of Chinese consumers.

Gasoline and diesel prices in April were up 29% and 32%, respectively, from a year ear-

lier, Wednesday's data showed.

Though Chinese consumer inflation is now at a five-month high, by global standards the price increases remain modest.

For the first four months of the year, China's consumer-price index was up 1.4% from a year earlier.

By contrast, in March U.S. consumer prices surged by 8.5%, a 40-year high, and inflation in India hit a 17-month high of 6.95%, exceeding the central bank's target.

Pyongyang Orders Omicron Lockdown

By Dasl Yoon

SEOUL—North Korea imposed a lockdown in all its major cities after it reported its first local case of Covid-19, more than two years after the pandemic began.

The Omicron variant was detected on May 8 in Pyongyang and the Politburo of the country's ruling Workers' Party passed a resolution to implement an emergency anti-epidemic system, according to a Thursday report in state media.

Since the start of the pandemic, North Korea has claimed it had zero Covid-19 cases despite having tested tens of thousands of people. North Korean authorities found their first local Covid-19 case after collecting samples from patients with fevers in Pyongyang, according to the report.

North Korea is particularly vulnerable to the pandemic, owing to poor healthcare infrastructure and widespread malnourishment. It has rejected nearly two million Covid-19 vaccines promised by the Covax initiative, a program financed mostly by Western governments to help lower-income countries with inoculations.

North Korea is one of only two countries that hasn't yet administered vaccines to its people, according to the World Health Organization. It has kept its borders mostly closed since January 2020, when neighboring countries began reporting Covid-19 cases.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed to overcome the "unexpected crisis" and urged tighter border controls, according to the Thursday state media report. Pyongyang's previous claims of being Covid-free have been doubted by health experts.

Beijing Censors Call to End Covid-19 Strategy

By Rachel Liang

SINGAPORE—China's censors blocked rare public criticism of its zero-Covid strategy by the World Health Organization from social media Wednesday, as officials in Shanghai insisted there would be no change to policies that have locked tens of millions of people in their homes for weeks.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said China's inflexible approach to Covid-19 needs to adapt to the evolving nature of the virus.

"When we talk about the

zero-Covid strategy, we don't think that it is sustainable considering the behavior of the virus now and what we anticipate in the future," Mr. Tedros told a briefing Tuesday.

The remarks pit the global health agency against Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who has hitched his reputation to the strategy of strict border controls, widespread lockdowns and mass quarantining of infected people.

Mr. Xi last week reiterated China's unwavering commitment to its approach and pledged to "resolutely fight"

questioning of policies.

An article that included a video clip of Mr. Tedros's remarks posted on the United Nations' WeChat account was widely shared on the micro-blogging platform.

The clip was quickly removed and the article was tagged as "violating laws and regulations"—meaning it could still be read but not shared. On Weibo, China's Twitter, searches for #Tedros no longer worked as of Wednesday evening local time.

The incident helps illustrate the vanishing space for debate

over China's Covid controls.

There was no acknowledgment of the WHO's comments in major state-run media Wednesday, though a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry called for Mr. Tedros to avoid making what he called irresponsible comments.

At Shanghai's daily Covid-19 briefing, Wu Huanyu, deputy director of the city's center for disease control, reaffirmed that China will stick to the policy dubbed "dynamic zero."

The industrial, trade and financial hub of 25 million people recorded 1,289 new locally

transmitted cases Wednesday from the previous day, out of a nationwide tally of 1,637 new infections and half the number reported Tuesday.

There were seven new Covid-19-related deaths in Shanghai, bringing the toll in the current wave of infections since April 17 to 560.

Watch a Video



Scan this code for a video on the call for China to rethink its strategy.



Cardinal Joseph Zen held a donation box during a protest in Hong Kong in January 2019.

Retired Hong Kong Cardinal's Arrest Jeopardizes Vatican Ties

HONG KONG—National security police arrested Hong Kong's outspoken retired Cardinal Joseph Zen on Wednesday as part of a probe into a relief fund for people involved in pro-

By Elaine Yu, Selina Cheng and Francis X. Rocca

democracy protests, a move that could jeopardize a controversial rapprochement between Beijing and the Vatican.

Cardinal Zen, now bishop emeritus of Hong Kong, was arrested in a swoop on prominent pro-democracy figures, including a pop singer and a former lawmaker, said people familiar with the matter.

Using a sweeping national security law that was imposed by Beijing nearly two years ago to eliminate political dissent, Hong Kong police said they arrested four people for allegedly conspiring to collude with foreign forces by asking for sanctions to be imposed on Hong Kong.

Those arrested were trustees of a fund that was set up to offer legal advice, psychological counseling and emergency financial aid to those who were injured, arrested or jailed for their involvement in mass antigovernment protests in 2019. Cardinal Zen was released on bail late Wednesday.

The 90-year-old cardinal has

long campaigned for greater democracy in the city, which returned to Chinese rule from Britain 25 years ago, and he is a staunch critic of the Communist Party government in Beijing. In recent years, he also has been at odds with the Holy See, criticizing Pope Francis's agreements to give Beijing a say in the appointment of Catholic bishops in China.

"The Holy See is concerned upon learning the news of the arrest of Cardinal Zen and is following the evolution of the situation extremely attentively," the Vatican said.

Police have detained scores of pro-democracy activists as part of a crackdown on dissent since Beijing imposed a national security law on the city in June 2020. The measure has effectively wiped out opposition after large-scale street protests the previous year.

Foreign governments including the U.S., the U.K. and the EU have condemned the moves as suppression, and some have imposed sanctions on Hong Kong officials.

The arrest of a cardinal, even one who has criticized the policy of the pontificate, is likely to raise pressure on the Vatican to protest publicly. It also could make it harder for the Vatican to renew its controversial deal with Beijing on the appointment of bishops when it comes

up for renewal in October.

"This was a very grave error by the Hong Kong authorities," said Francesco Sisci, an Italian-China expert who teaches at Beijing's Renmin University of China. "It needlessly aggravates relations with the West and the Christian world...and puts Cardinal Zen back at center stage."

A representative of the Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong said the office was still trying to understand the situation and declined further comment.

Hong Kong police said they arrested two males and two females between the ages of 45 and 90 on Tuesday and Wednesday, and ordered them to surrender their travel documents. Police said they were trustees of the 612 Humanitarian Relief Fund and were "suspected of asking foreign or overseas organizations to impose sanctions on the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, endangering national security."

Local pop singer Denise Ho, known for her support of the city's democracy movement was arrested at her home Wednesday, according to people familiar with the situation.

Hui Po-keung, a cultural-studies scholar, was arrested at the Hong Kong airport on Tuesday, and Margaret Ng, a high-profile barrister and former lawmaker, also was arrested, one of the people said.

dog•ged

/ˈdɒɡəd/

adjective

Despite spending my early life in a shelter, there's no dog more determined than me. Thanks to the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation, if you're ever trapped under rubble after a disaster, I'll find you. That's my job, and what I was born to do. You'll never find a dog more *dogged*.

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Victor

Active Search Dog
Rescued from Redding, CA.
Photographed by Shaina Fishman
at SDF's National Training Center.



FROM PAGE ONE

China's Premier Steps Out

Continued from Page One
selection of his replacement when he steps down as premier in less than a year, said the people close to decision-making. His goal is another premier who would be a counterweight to Mr. Xi as he consolidates power to rule for at least another five years, the people said.

In China's opaque political system, it is difficult to gauge how much support Mr. Li has. The people close to decision-making said his moves are backed by some Communist Party officials who worry Mr. Xi has focused too heavily on adhering to an ideology rooted in Mao Zedong's socialist vision, rather than on giving priority to practical measures to ensure economic growth.

Supporters of Mr. Li's efforts include officials with ties to the Communist Youth League, a once-powerful organization that produced past leaders including former party chief Hu Jintao, but has fallen out of favor in the Xi era.

Last month, during an inspection tour of Jiangxi, a farm province in eastern China, Mr. Li visited an industrial park populated with e-commerce firms. That industry has been hit hard by Mr. Xi's campaign to rein in tech companies and punish what Mr. Xi has described as "disorderly expansion of capital"—a euphemism for unchecked free-market behavior.

Standing in front of a crowd of e-commerce executives and their employees, Mr. Li promised to invigorate the "platform economy"—meaning internet-based businesses such as online retailer Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.—and to promote entrepreneurship. "We support the platform economy," the premier told a cheering crowd, according to a video of the event. "We support entrepreneurs."

A few days later, a meeting of the Politburo, a 25-member central decision-making body, signaled a halt to Mr. Xi's regulatory crackdown on tech firms, which has included hefty fines and other punishments that have eroded business confidence and led to mass layoffs. An official readout of the meeting called for measures to "support the standardized and healthy development of the platform economy."

The people close to decision-making said feedback Mr. Li and his team had received from inspection tours since late last year showed that Mr. Xi's clampdown had hurt employment and growth. "Li is the driving force behind the shift," one of the people said.

Such changes, however, aren't expected to lead to a paring back of Mr. Xi's expansion of the state's role in the economy or to enhance China's engagement with the West. Mr. Xi remains China's most powerful leader in decades, and many senior leaders agree with his hard-line policies.

Policy victories by Mr. Li



Premier Li Keqiang, above left, and President Xi Jinping at the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Beijing last year. The Covid-19 lockdown in Shanghai, below, in May. Much of China has been forced into lockdowns by Mr. Xi's zero-Covid approach.



and his supporters could easily be reversed. Mr. Xi's distrust of private capital would make it difficult for any other senior leader to steer China back toward economic liberalization.

Regardless, for now, Mr. Li's profile has been rising. An analysis of state-media reports by Minxin Pei, editor of quarterly journal China Leadership Monitor, shows that Mr. Li appeared in newspaper headlines 15 times more in 2021 than the previous year, and is on track to roughly double last year's number if early-2022 trends continue.

Before 2021, Mr. Li was "practically nonexistent," said Mr. Pei, who is also a professor of political science at Claremont McKenna College in California. Now, the premier "looks better by the day," he said. "Xi is an ideological leftist deep down, but he has to make tactical compromises over the economy."

Frustrations with Mr. Xi's leadership are building ahead of a pivotal party conclave this fall, where he is aiming to secure a third term. While that plan remains on track, there is uncertainty whether Mr. Xi will be able to surround him-

self with loyalists or will have to make room for dissenting views, as was common in previous Chinese governments.

The new makeup of the party's top leadership body, the Politburo Standing Committee, will be decided this summer when current and former Chinese leaders meet in the northern seaside town of Beidaihe, according to party insiders.

Cautious politician

People close to Mr. Li describe him as a skilled but cautious politician who has embraced market liberalization, yet is driven more by pragmatism than ideology.

As a young man, he studied law at the prestigious Peking University, then pursued a doctorate in economics under a prominent Chinese economist known for advocating Deng Xiaoping's market-reform agenda and privatizing state firms.

While at the university, he joined the leadership ranks of the Communist Youth League, which had a reputation for embracing economic reform, albeit within the party system. Mr. Li later ran China's

rust-belt Liaoning province. To measure growth there, he eschewed official gross domestic product data and instead used indicators such as power generation and freight volume as more reliable measures of economic performance.

Mr. Li eventually became the favorite of then party chief, Mr. Hu, to succeed him, but Mr. Hu was outmaneuvered by party elders who favored Mr. Xi, a son of a revolutionary leader, according to historians and party insiders. Mr. Li settled for the No. 2 position.

During the two decades before Mr. Xi rose to power, the premiership had considerable clout. The president, who is also the party chief, oversaw politics, diplomacy and security. The premier, technically the head of government, managed the economy.

As premier, Mr. Li wanted to remake China's debt-driven development model by curbing vast bank lending, which had saddled China with debts and projects with little commercial value.

Mr. Li also wanted state firms to slim down and become more efficient, and to make it easier for migrant

workers' families to get education and other benefits in cities.

Barclays economists coined a term for Mr. Li's priorities: "Likonomics."

That term fell out of favor when it became clear Mr. Xi was subverting the traditional division of labor between the president and the premier and taking charge of the economy.

Mr. Xi was depicted as playing a central role in an ambitious economic agenda approved by the party's Central Committee in November 2013. State media published a lengthy account saying Mr. Xi had personally led the plan's drafting. The account mentioned Mr. Xi's name 34 times. Mr. Li wasn't mentioned once.

Since then, Mr. Xi has hammered home the need for tighter party control over the economy with a wider role for state enterprises. He reined in the Communist Youth League, in part through corruption investigations.

Mr. Li's urbanization plan was supplanted by one focused on building up smaller cities and towns. His push to revamp state firms was trumped by Mr. Xi's emphasis on strengthening the state sector. His support for Internet-based businesses, seen as a way to provide jobs, was followed by Mr. Xi's effort over the past year to bring those firms to heel.

Mr. Li fell into line. Party insiders said he had little choice but to accept a supporting role.

Economic strains

Widening grievances within the party over Mr. Xi's policies are creating an opening for Mr. Li and his supporters. China's economy is struggling, and its financial markets are suffering. Some economists expect growth to contract this quarter. Millions of graduates are struggling to find jobs.

Mr. Xi's entente with Russian President Vladimir Putin is leaving China more isolated on the world stage than any

time in decades. Frustration with Mr. Xi's autocratic style is boiling over, according to people familiar with party discussions.

In feedback gathered recently by Communist Party schools, which help disseminate policy in China, many party members expressed concern that Mr. Xi puts ideology over practical steps to keep the economy strong, according to the people familiar with the discussions.

"Politics in command" has replaced "economics in command" as the central task of the party," one official said in the feedback. "That's a main issue raised with Xi's leadership," an official familiar with the feedback said.

As doubts grow about Beijing's resolve to continue Deng Xiaoping's "reform and opening," which has propelled Chinese growth since the 1980s, economic development remains the party's central task, Mr. Li has said in recent meetings with multinational executives, local officials and government advisers.

Mr. Li has overseen much of the recent effort to shore up growth, including prodding banks to lend. The Finance Ministry is speeding up approval of local bonds to help finance infrastructure investment, while putting on the back burner experiments with new property-tax programs that Mr. Xi had advocated as a way to tamp down housing speculation.

Worried about the effect of Mr. Xi's Covid control measures on jobs and the economy, Mr. Li has held meetings instructing various ministries to clear logistical hurdles for facilities like Tesla Inc.'s Shanghai plant to resume production.

Mr. Li's efforts will be put to the test at the all-important party conclave later this year.

Grievances over Mr. Xi's policies are creating an opening for Mr. Li.

Mr. Xi's desired candidate for the next premier, Li Qiang, Shanghai's party secretary, is being criticized by some inside the party for his handling of Covid-19 outbreaks in the city, where lockdowns led to widespread anger.

Candidates supported by Premier Li may be gaining ground, people familiar with decision-making said. They include Wang Yang, who heads China's top government advisory body, and Hu Chunhua, a current vice premier in charge of trade and foreign investment. Both held roles in the Communist Youth League.

Mr. Wang was named mayor at age 33 of a Yangtze River port city, where locals dubbed him "baby mayor." He later ran the southern province of Guangdong, known for entrepreneurship and technology development.

Mr. Hu also ran Guangdong, between 2012 and 2017, after years of governing Inner Mongolia. He is known to many as "little Hu" because of similarities between his career and Hu Jintao's.

Wednesday Has Become Office Day

Continued from Page One
pancy in many big cities, a sign salespeople know that is the day they're likeliest to find contacts in the office, said Jan Freitag, director of hospitality analytics at CoStar Group Inc.

An average of 46% of U.S. office workers went to work on Wednesdays in March, said Kastle Systems, a security firm that monitors access-card swipes. That trounced Monday's meager 35%.

Wednesday used to be rather ho-hum as days go—too far into the week to start anything ambitious, but not close enough to the weekend to start pining for time off.

Nobody talks about the Wednesday-morning blues. There's no Wednesday the 13th film series. No one says TGIW. Consider its distinctly unglamorous nickname: Hump Day.

So what has made Wednesday Office Day instead?

In a world of hybrid work, many companies that allow employees to split time between the office and their home let them choose which days to come in. But many firms would like it to be about three.

"Some [companies] are saying Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. Some are saying Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Some are saying Wednesday, Thursday, Friday," said Brian Kropp, chief of human-resources research for advisory firm Gartner.

There's one common day in these scenarios: "All the natural rhythms of work say that Wednesdays are going to be the day when we're together," Mr. Kropp said.

Office landlords and downtown business organizations fretful about the slow pace of tenants' return are trying to pick up on the Wednesday momentum by holding special events. On a Wednesday morning earlier this month, members of the Chicago Group Alliance greeted returning workers at the Thompson Center office building, cheering marathon-style.

Dozens of office buildings managed by JLL, a real estate services firm, hold themed



Members of the Chicago Loop Alliance cheered returning office workers on Wednesday of last week.

events every Wednesday. There are Woof Wednesdays for dog owners in a San Francisco building that allows tenants to bring pets.

In other cities, there are

Wellness Wednesdays with fitness classes on roofs and plazas.

Last week, Wednesday fortuitously fell on May 4, which has been adopted by Star

Wars fans for "May the Fourth Be With You" celebrations. Two of JLL's Washington, D.C., buildings treated tenants to Yoda Soda, Wookiee Cookies and Jabba Juice.

In Florida, Breakwater Hospitality Group is planning to add Whiskey Wednesday and Wine Wednesday events at its restaurants in Fort Lauderdale and Miami's Brickell business district to capitalize on the trend.

The critical mass of workers on Wednesday can be self-reinforcing, some managers suggest. Employees say they like office socialization, so it makes sense to go in on the day you think the most other people will.

"Wednesday is definitely the anchor," said Rebecca Tsallis, one of the architects of a hybrid work strategy for North America at Ford Motor Co.

Office workers are still adapting to Wednesday's new prominence. People working from home on Mondays and Tuesdays no longer feel the "Sunday scaries" as Monday approaches, said Caitlin Rogers, principal of Aila Via, a Chicago marketing firm.

Some are even beginning to express frustration about

Wednesdays because there isn't enough room, in the case of businesses that shed space during the pandemic in anticipation of a hybrid work strategy, said Mr. Kropp of Gartner.

The result is a little Wednesday-morning quarter-backing. Mr. Kropp said workers are saying, "Gosh, you tell me to come in and it's crowded. And then you say because it's crowded, we're not supposed to be in a conference room all together....So, why am I coming in again?"

If the rate of return to the office keeps rising, some employers might start encouraging workers to come in on more Mondays and Fridays, according to workplace consultants. Otherwise, employers that have unloaded a lot of space might risk running out of room on Wednesdays.

Allie Brush won't cause them any problem. Ms. Brush, the client-relations director for a New York architecture and engineering firm, got used to working alone during the pandemic and prefers it for the quiet.

She goes to her office on Mondays and Tuesdays, when the place is less crowded.

"I avoid the chaos of Wednesday," she said.



ON THE CLOCK
CALLUM BORCHERS

IT'S A JOB TITLE that prompts smirks and questions: chief happiness officer.

If you're wondering what a CHO does all day, or imagining a gig that's all about smiling, then you're partly right. This month's duties for Erika Conklin, CHO of a digital marketing startup, included procuring beer and Jet Skis for a company retreat to Sarasota, Fla.

Ms. Conklin, who started in April 2020, says after two pandemic years that her role "sounds a lot sexier than it actually is."

Sure, she comes up with zany team-building activities. Yet the position can sometimes make her seem like a rebranded human-resources manager.

She still deals with questions about benefits and payroll. And she often works late, signing contracts for company events or listening when co-workers need to vent about whatever makes them *unhappy*.

Being responsible for others' high spirits comes with a lot of pressure, CHOs say. So does the expectation to always appear cheerful.

"Generally, I am very positive—my husband and my immediate family are the only ones who see the not-so-great side," says Ms. Conklin, 43 years old. "When I am not feeling particularly happy, I do put on a smile."

It's hard to quantify how many companies have chief happiness officers, but thousands of workers now identify as such on

Keeping Workers Happy Is No Joke To These Officers

LinkedIn—65% more than two years ago, according to the social-media network.

The position isn't entirely new, but it hasn't always been seen as legit, either. In one of the first notable uses, McDonald's Corp. "promoted" Ronald McDonald to chief happiness officer in 2003 as a joke.

More recently, tech companies such as Google and SAP have assigned the moniker to non-mascots. The late Zappos chief executive, Tony Hsieh, was famously committed to a fun working environment, and his book, "Delivering Happiness," prompted other business leaders to prioritize workers' emotional well-being.

Companies grappling with remote or hybrid workforces and a tight labor market want to keep employees satisfied and engaged. Some are telling their finance, operations and technology chiefs to make room for a grand vizier of the company vibe.

The perch is lofty but not necessarily cushy. At a time when many workers feel empowered to ask for raises and flexible hours—and can snag competing offers with ease—CHOs' mission is to retain talent with as many cold-brew

taps and Pilates classes as it takes.

Other fluffy-sounding titles are popping up, too, as HR departments, often led by chief people officers, try making workers feel more like humans and less like resources. Airbnb has a global head of employee experience and Slack has a senior vice president of employee success. A Slack spokeswoman says the role reflects the company's commitment to a workplace "where all employees are empowered to do their best work."

Whatever the label, the idea is to show that companies are invested in employees' mental and emotional health, says Karyn Twaronite, the global head of diversity, equity and inclusion at Ernst & Young.

"Companies are having to pay much greater attention to how their employees feel," says Ms. Twaronite, whose firm recently added a mindfulness leader and a chief well-being officer.

When I spoke with her, Ms. Twaronite said she'd just gotten out of a 90-minute meeting with EY's chief executive and a few dozen business leaders. The central topic wasn't earnings; it was loneliness. EY recently surveyed 5,000 workers

in the U.S. and four other countries and found 82% were, or had been, lonely in their jobs.

Ensuring a whole staff feels good isn't easy. And if morale sinks or the retention rate slips, the person with "happiness" in their title is likely to get some of the blame.

Izzy Blach, CHO of a digital-media agency in New York, polls her roughly 100 co-workers weekly so that she always knows the collective mood. "If there's a dip, we ask, 'Why?'" she says. "If it soars, we're like, 'What are we doing? How can we keep repeating this?'"

Popular initiatives include career coaching, personal-finance tips, a book club and a company volleyball team on which Ms. Blach, who played the sport in college, is a big asset.

I asked Ms. Blach, a 32-year-old former HR analyst, whether she stresses about her colleagues' levels of happiness.

CHOs' mission is to retain talent with as many cold-brew taps and Pilates classes as it takes.

"Yeah, I do!" she said.

Dispensing happiness can cause anxiety, and the professional bringers of sunshine and joy have strategies for keeping dark clouds away.

Sarah Klegman, the 34-year-old CHO of a real-estate accounting firm in Los Angeles, starts her day with a gratitude journal. "I list a few things that I'm grateful for, a few things that I feel will make the

day great, and I've got a few affirmations that I say to myself."

Ms. Klegman—a former talent manager for comedians—says she needs to be intentional about her attitude.

Camille Meyer-Arendt's outlet is kickball. The CHO of a bicycle-tour company in Seattle plays in an adult league of mostly 20-somethings on a team of people who are around her age, 39.

So happiness is found hurling a rubber ball at a runner on the base path? "You can do that, but it's not strategic," she says, adding that pegging an opponent, though exhilarating, can produce a wild bounce that lets the other team score.

I'd find it hard to resist the rush of drilling someone rounding first base. But a consummate happiness officer is willing to delay gratification in pursuit of a bigger goal.

Sherrri Brown's mandate as CHO of a 40-person upholstery business in St. Louis is to hold on to good workers and customers after an acquisition led to new management in 2020. She says she's succeeded by getting to know people personally and thinking about small gestures that can go a long way.

For example, she knew several factory workers wouldn't be able to fully participate in a recent company luncheon because they were fasting during Ramadan. She packed the meal in to-go containers for after sundown.

Ms. Brown, 46, says she tries to set the right tone every day by rolling up to work in a bright yellow Jeep, often sporting big, colorful earrings and a shirt with a positive slogan. The motto on her chest when we spoke: "Smiles are contagious. Be a carrier."

By ALEX JANIN

The pandemic might have killed the sick day, but the mental-health day is thriving.

With workplace burnout at high levels, nearly two-thirds of U.S. workers say they would take a day off from work for mental health now, compared with 45% before the pandemic, according to a February survey by LinkedIn.

Yet taking a mental-health day delivers few benefits if it is spent binge-watching shows, scrolling apps or tackling the errand list, health and workplace experts say. It is useful to start a mental-health day with a plan, they say, and to include activities that are restorative but not harried, such as a long walk or a meaningful call with a friend.

Burnout is often a result of energy drain, and binge-watching TV or scrolling social media can further drain your reserves, says Kelly Greenwood, chief executive of Mind Share Partners, a nonprofit that provides training on mental-health strategies in the workplace.

"It's like eating junk food: It tastes good in the moment but it's not good for you longer term," she says. Activities like exercise, getting outside, and social connections are energy fillers, she says.

Here are strategies that mental-health professionals recommend to get the most out of your day off for mental-health awareness month in May and beyond.

Plan ahead if you can

If you can plan ahead to take a mental-health day, it can be more healing than simply taking one



The Right Way to Take A Mental-Health Day

It is useful to include restorative activities such as a long walk or a massage.

when you feel overwhelmed or run down, mental-health experts say.

Personal time off can be beneficial regardless of when it is planned, but taking a day off at the last minute or midway through a difficult day could cause feelings of stress or guilt about extra work your colleagues may have to pick up, says Kia-Rai Prewitt, a behavioral-health psychologist at Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Prewitt says clients have talked about this guilt during the pandemic in the face of staff shortages and long working hours.

She recommends looking for patterns in your work calendar, including which days are often least busy or have fewer meetings, and scheduling mental-health days in advance once a month or once every few months.

Having to take several unplanned days could signal a bigger problem, perhaps with a co-worker, boss or your broader mental wellness, says Nancy Spangler, a workplace mental-health consultant. If this is happening to you, consider whether you need other resources, too.

"There's only so much that self-care can do if you're running up

against systemic issues in a workplace that are causing poor mental health," Ms. Greenwood says.

Slow down

An effective mental-health day allows you to savor moments for yourself, Dr. Spangler says. Don't spend the time catching up on chores or working through your email backlog.

Anxiety-provoking activities, of which email can be one, can increase the sympathetic nervous system and send the body into fight-or-flight mode, Dr. Spangler says. Slowing the body's production

of cortisol, a stress hormone, will help with recovery.

To start the day, focus on your thoughts and emotions. Ask yourself whether you're feeling generally positive or negative. Then, consider which activities will help the most.

Often, those may be prolonged versions of restorative activities you do daily, like taking a walk or reading a book.

Martin Odima Jr., 35, a special-education teacher in St. Paul, Minn., recalls a recent mental-health day spent reading, going for a run with his two huskies around a nearby lake, and listening to a classical-music playlist.

If you've been giving priority to work over social connections, calling a friend or family member you haven't spoken with in a while can be fulfilling, Dr. Prewitt says.

Get outside

For those unsure where to start, going outside is a good place to begin, Dr. Spangler says. A recent study from Cleveland Clinic found that 37% of Americans who rated their mental health as low spend time outside regularly, compared with 46% of those who rated their mental health as high.

Mario Toneguzzi, 65, a freelance journalist in Calgary, Alberta, says he feels more creative and productive after spending some time outdoors. During a recent mental-health day, Mr. Toneguzzi enjoyed a jaunt on an ungrooved path at a hillside park, followed by a stroll at a retreat center with a view of the mountains.

"The machine can't run constantly. It needs to just stop, refresh, energize and fill up the tank," Mr. Toneguzzi says.

PERSONAL JOURNAL.



PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY
JOANNA STERN

Apple Killed the iPod. Here's Why It Should Live On.

It wasn't an easy phone call, but someone had to break the news to Ann Pfund, a devoted iPod owner from Austin, Texas.

Me: The iPod is dead. **Apple** is discontinuing it.
Ann: Yes, it's just awful. It's a very sad day for music lovers like myself. I have had an iPod in some form or another since 2004.
Me: What will you do?
Ann: Probably search eBay for used ones.
Me: I'm here for you.

On Tuesday, Apple announced it was officially over the iPod. After more than 20 years of click wheels, play buttons and enough color options to fill a Sherwin-Williams store, the company said the current iPod Touch, first introduced nearly three years ago, is only "available while supplies last."

At this point you likely have one of two reactions:

- "They still make iPods? I remember my first one. The one with the wheel. I took a 50-page book of CDs and fit them all in there."
- "Why, why, why? I love my iPod. It's so much better than the iPhone, Spotify and all that dumb streaming stuff. UGH!"

I have heard a lot of the latter over the past few months. Every Friday in my Tech Things newsletter, I feature a "Throwback Thing," an old tech product submitted by readers.

The most common submission? iPods! And it isn't just that people have them sitting in their personal tech museums. They still use these old music players in their cars, in their living rooms and on their runs.

This lingering devotion makes sense. The iPod and the iTunes music store may have given way to all the smartphones and streaming services on which so many of us are now stuck, but that doesn't mean the newer arrivals are better.

In fact, my new friends have me convinced there's a lot to love about a dedicated music player.



The original iPod, right, made its debut in 2001; the iPod Touch in 2007.

So it's with their sentiments that we send off this beloved and world-changing product. (Cue the Sarah McLachlan...)

No distractions
Most who cling to their iPods agree: No internet is pretty great sometimes.

No notifications interrupting your music, no Twitter or Instagram tempting you just a tap away, no cluttered streaming-service interface with artists and albums begging, "Listen to me! Listen to me!"

Daniel Koenig from Columbia, Mo., who uses a purple i6GB

fifth-generation iPod Nano, said he loves music more with the iPod than he ever did when he used Spotify.

He said buying music and putting it on a separate device means he has a stronger connection to it, like it's his music.

And listening without incessant notifications pinging away? He and others told me that on their iPhones, even if they turn on Do Not Disturb, they still feel that temptation to jump to other apps.

"Music seems more special and important when I listen to it and devote all my attention to it," he said. He likes putting on a



playlist, gazing out the window "while my mind spaces out."

Long battery life
You know what Ms. Pfund didn't need when she took a 19-hour flight to South Africa for her honeymoon? A charger for her sixth-generation iPod Classic, which she bought in 2007. Its battery life was originally listed as 40 hours for music playback.

She also didn't have to make sure she had enough music downloaded for offline playback before takeoff. It's all just there on its 160GB hard drive. Yes, it's a spinning drive, and, yes, she said she loves the feel of it gently whirring in her hand. (Nothing makes me more nervous than a spinning hard drive in 2022, now that more dependable solid-state drives are all the rage, but you keep living on the edge, Ann!)

Lots of space
Ms. Pfund said she has 40GB of music on there. The iPod is still only a quarter full, but all that music would clog her iPhone. She said she doesn't want to worry about it, or feel compelled to spend more to get an iPhone with the maximum amount of storage.

Murray Berkowitz of West Palm Beach, Fla., has an iPhone XR with a little under 20GB of remaining storage. Meanwhile, his fifth-generation iPod Classic can hold 30GB. He, too, has decided to keep using his iPod to play music, especially in his car.

Small and durable
Jim Fantazzia of Horsham, Pa., often takes the original iPod Shuffle on walks. Resembling a white stick of gum with buttons, he said it's lightweight, and there's no screen to break. Yes, he admitted he has dropped it many times over the years.

Of course, no screen means no interface for selecting songs. That's part of the thrill, Mr. Fantazzia said. "I like that it takes out a guessing game as far as what I want to listen to, I just hit play and let the Shuffle do its thing."

When I heard the news, I called up Tony Fadell, a former Apple senior vice president who is credited with inventing the iPod. I asked him what he had to say to people who just want something as simple as his 20-year-old invention.

He said the iPod's demise was inevitable, for business reasons. However, he thinks there's real value in a dedicated audio player without all the distractions of the internet. "I do believe the iPod should go on," he added.

(OK, now cue the Celine Dion...) My advice? Follow Ms. Pfund over to eBay. I don't think iPods will ever go out of fashion there. —Cordilia James contributed to this article.

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Airbnb Adds Options For Extended Stays

BY ALLISON POHLE

Airbnb Inc. is introducing a new feature to cater to travelers with longer trips in mind.

The company's new split-stay feature allows guests booking trips for one week or more to divide trips between two different homes. Chief Executive Brian Chesky says the option can help travelers find nearby properties when there is limited availability on certain dates or allow travelers to try more than one property. Guests will generally see around 40% more listings when searching for longer stays with this feature, the company says.

Travel behavior has evolved since the onset of the pandemic, with more people taking advantage of the opportunity to work remotely and extend vacations. The average night stay between Memorial Day and Labor Day is 4.84 days, up from 4.18 days in 2021, according to data from VacationRenter, a short-term rental platform.

Mr. Chesky said in an earnings call this month that nearly half of nights booked in the first quarter were for stays of a week or longer and one in five nights booked were for stays of a month or longer. Stays of 28 days or more made up 21% of bookings in the first quarter, down from 24% in the same period a year earlier but above prepandemic levels. Travelers have also turned to extended-stay hotels.

Airbnb was initially crushed during the onset of the pandemic. The company paused nonessential projects, cut a quarter of staff and slashed its marketing budget. The company rebounded as more people

worked remotely and traveled to domestic destinations outside of cities. Airbnb hasn't posted an annual profit since its founding in 2008, but Chief Financial Officer Dave Stephenson told analysts this month that the company expects to post its first full-year net profit this year.

The company announced other changes, too. A redesigned search tool allows guests to sort properties into more than 50 categories based on design, location and nearby activities—

21%

Stays of 28 days or more in first quarter at Airbnb properties



Airbnb's redesigned search tool lets guests sort properties further.

castles, beachfront or skiing, for instance. This change was meant to encourage travelers to consider new destinations to which they might not have given priority, the company says.

The latest update doesn't change how total cost and additional charges, such as cleaning fees, are displayed in certain search results. Mr. Chesky says that will arrive "in the coming months."

The company is also now offering guests a free service called AirCover. Under this policy, if a host cancels your booking within 30 days of check-in, the company will find a similar or better home, or will refund you.

Travelers are facing higher prices amid pent-up travel demand, and some Americans are rethinking their summer plans. As of early April, average daily short-term rental rates are trending 11.7% higher for the rest of spring and 5.9% higher for summer compared with the same periods last year, according to a report from analytics firm AirDNA.

Travelers have expressed frustration over rising prices. If gasoline prices don't come down, 58% of American travelers predict they will be taking fewer road trips this spring and summer, and 60% predict they will be staying closer to home on their road trips, according to a survey from market-research firm Destination Analysts. De-

spite economic concerns, about 61% of travelers surveyed say leisure travel is a high priority in their budget for the next three months, the data show.

On Tuesday, the Transportation Security Administration said anticipated passenger volumes will match and might occasionally exceed 2019 levels for the first time since the pandemic began.

ARTS IN REVIEW



ART REVIEW

A Contemplation Of Zen That Surprises

This show of Japanese works at the Freer Gallery upends stereotypes

By Lee Lawrence

From the upper reaches of a hanging scroll, a dragon swoops down to rest its head on the lap of a haloed man, pinned into submission by the man's stare. Time has muted the pigments, but a close look reveals flames bursting along the dragon's spine, while gilded motifs edge the sitter's robe and a deep-blue lining peeks through its folds. This 14th-century depiction of an enlightened arhat subduing the cosmic forces of a dragon is not what you might expect to see in a show about Zen Buddhism. In the U.S. today, Zen more typically conjures images of rock gardens with meticulously raked pebbles or ink circles drawn in a single brushstroke lasting the length of a breath.

No such works feature in "Mind Over Matter: Zen in Medieval Japan" at the Freer Gallery of Art, part of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art. Instead, the show's curators—Frank Feltens, the museum's associate curator of Japanese art, and Yukio Lippit, who teaches at Harvard University—use the museum's impressive collection to upend current stereotypes and illustrate the impact Zen had on Japan's art and culture.

The show focuses on the 13th to early 17th centuries, when the Chan (or meditation) school took

root and its approach to Buddhism flourished in Japan as Zen. While depictions of arhats and other semi-divine beings attest to the fact that traditionally revered Buddhist figures persisted, a dozen or so works highlight some of Zen's distinctiveness. In a 13th-century portrait attributed to the Chinese monk Hu Zhifu, for example, a man displays the marks of enlightenment: the small circle on his forehead, hair in tight curls, the

One ink portrait by an unidentified monk, for example, captures a violent intensity.

protrusion at the apex of the skull. But the newly enlightened Buddha is not sitting under a bodhi tree, as tradition has it. He stands, clad in a simple cloth, bony and so unkempt that his toenails curve to the ground like claws. His eyes are not lowered; as he leans forward, they squint as though to grasp the full measure of what he is seeing, which is nothing less than the true nature of reality.

Anyone, Zen adherents believe, can experience enlightenment suddenly and unexpectedly, and portraits here range from serious abbots to flagrant rule-breakers. The selection of paintings also gives us

a sense of the variety among Zen practices. The ink portrait of Linji Yixuan by an unidentified 15th- or 16th-century Japanese monk captures the sometimes violent intensity of the Rinzai sect's approach. It depicts the ninth-century Chinese patriarch sitting in a meditation that is anything but peaceful: Hands clamp into fists, mouth stretches over bared teeth, forehead creases. By contrast, a charming early 15th-century ink painting by Sekkyakushi suggests a gentler approach: A boy astride a water buffalo appears to be steering a beast that is as wayward as the mind—not by yanking on the reins, but with a gentle prod.

The inaugural show of "The Arts of Devotion," a series of four exhibitions that will explore the intersection of religion and art, "Mind Over Matter" achieves a good balance. Cases with ceramics and lacquer wares show that Zen also introduced more worldly predilections. One was tea drinking, which spurred the creation of tea accessories and, over time, gave rise to the tea ceremony. Another was the art of Chinese ink painting. Monks acquired works they kept in monasteries, copying and adapting their compositions and brushstrokes.

Particularly cherished were scholar-artists' landscapes. In one gallery, five- and six-foot-tall landscapes stretch across six-panel screens, illustrating how Japanese monks moved the ink tradition forward. In a painting attributed to



Installation view of the exhibition, above left; painting of an arhat by Ryōzen (active c. 1328-1360).

Sesshū Tōyō (1420-c. 1506), for instance, broken lines, dashes and washes texture a rocky peninsula. In "Autumn and Winter Landscape" by Sesson Shūkei (c. 1492-1577), long brushstrokes form boulders that variously arc, plummet and cascade, as waves, rushing up against the shoreline, splinter into curling tendrils. In contrast, Unkoku Toeki (1591-1644) imbued mountains with the softness of clouds in "Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers."

Elsewhere in the show, Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1481) brings to life in calligraphy the tone and emotions of a conversation he recounts between a Zen master known as Bird Nest and a governor; the fluid brushstrokes of 15th-century monk painter Geiai turn a willow tree with birds into a soothing vision; and borrowing a splashed-ink technique from earlier Chinese painters, Josui Soen merges controlled strokes and accidental drips into an

abstracted scene (also 15th century) of a hut tucked into the base of a mountain, the perfect place for a meditation retreat.

Soen's is also one of the works about which curators included outside perspectives, among them the personal reflections of Inryu Bobbi Poncé-Barger, a Zen teacher and priest in Washington, and the reactions of a high-school student. The latter had not associated Zen with a minimalist aesthetic, thereby proving that even stereotypes are not universal; and the former, a female Zen priest, underscores a central premise of the show and of Buddhism itself: impermanence and change.

Mind Over Matter: Zen in Medieval Japan

National Museum of Asian Art, through July 24

Ms. Lawrence writes about Asian and Islamic art for the Journal.

CULTURAL COMMENTARY

When the Stones Gathered in France

By Marc Myers

The Rolling Stones in the spring of 1971 were a band on the run. Victims of bad business advice and Britain's steep, punitive tax rates, the Stones had brought in a new business manager, Prince Rupert Loewenstein, who urged them in early '71 to become tax exiles in Southern France.

By June, the band was recording in the dank, partitioned basement of Keith Richards's rented French villa near Nice, their 16-track "Mighty Mobile" studio truck parked outside. The Stones were under pressure to complete an album for their new Stones-owned label in advance of a planned American tour the following June and July.

The result was "Exile on Main St.," their 12th studio album released in the U.S. and their first double LP, which turns 50 on May 12. The record reached No. 1 on the Billboard album chart and was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2012. At the time of their exile, the Stones were joined in France by saxophonist Bobby Keys, keyboardist Nicky Hopkins and producer-percussionist Jimmy Miller.

Initially belittled by rock critics as directionless, "Exile" was soon breathlessly hailed as rock's boldest album. Not only did the harsh recording burnish the Stones' reputation as "the greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world," but it also partially erased their nasty image after the violent Altamont free concert in December 1969.



Today marks the 50th anniversary of 'Exile on Main St.'

Each song on the album seems to have a dual personality, like a radio dial lodged between two stations. At the music's core is the classic Stones approach—with Keith Richards's jutting guitar, Mick Taylor's guitar fills, Bill Wyman's bass and Charlie Watts's snapping drums topped by Mick Jagger's gritty blues vocals.

But each song also has a thick spread of American rock and soul

styles underneath, punched up by horns, piano and gospel background vocals. The album's 18 songs embrace the Delta blues, Bakersfield honky-tonk, Southern rock, Memphis soul, Laurel Canyon folk-rock and even the San Francisco jamming style developed by the Grateful Dead.

By 1971, the Stones were steeped in American pop styles picked up while touring since June 1964. But

"Exile" also has a distinctly dark tone. As Mr. Wyman noted in his 1990 memoir, "Stone Alone," the months in France were a "tense" and "rootless" period when practically all band members "dabbled in drugs," except for Messrs. Wyman, Watts and Hopkins. Mr. Richards was more blunt in "Life," his 2010 memoir: "Two songs a day written on a heroin habit."

The rollicking opener "Rocks Off" is a perfect mash of American rock influences. Mr. Jagger sings the verses with a vocal reminiscent of Lou Reed on "Sunday Morning," backed by a churning Little Richard-like piano and chanting horn riffs. The song's sudden midway break reminds one of the psychedelic downshift on the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations."

"Rip This Joint" is a rockabilly hoe-down with Mr. Jagger's vocal laced with Jerry Lee Lewis's manic delivery. The tempo is likely the fastest used on any recorded Stones song. According to Mr. Jagger, the lyrics to the slinky blues "Casino Boogie" were written by him and Mr. Richards by jotting down phrases on paper strips and plucking them out of a pile: "Wounded lover, got no time on hand / One last cycle, thrill freak Uncle Sam / Pause for business, hope you'll understand."

In the 2010 documentary "Stones in Exile," Mr. Jagger said that lyrics for the top-10 single "Tumbling Dice" came from a conversation he had with his housekeeper, who liked to gamble: "Baby, got no flavor, fever in the funk house now / This low down

bitchin' got my poor feet a itchin' / Don't you know, you know the deuce is still wild."

"Sweet Virginia" opens with a Neil Young vibe and is among the album's most intriguing pieces. Mr. Jagger uses a country croon that's joined by a saxophone solo and gospel handclaps.

"Happy," the album's second single, was written mostly by Mr. Richards, who takes the lead vocal. Apparently, the rest of the Stones were late to arrive at his villa that night and he went at it alone on guitar and bass with Mr. Miller on drums and Mr. Keys on maracas.

"Shine a Light" is a tribute to Stones founder Brian Jones, who had died in 1969. The song begins as a haunting ballad but soon transitions into a rousing gospel-rock work: "The angels beating all their wings in time / Smiles on their faces and a gleam right in their eyes / Whoa, thought I heard one sigh for you."

The closer, "Soul Survivor," brings the album back to the Stones' early, English-rock roots, with Mr. Jagger's vocal summing up their Riviera excesses: "I'm a soul survivor / Gonna be the death of me / It's gonna be the death of me."

What we hear in "Exile" is rock eclecticism shaded by lotusland decadence. After the album's release, the Stones became known for their primal sound rather than any particular rock style. The album and shift weren't lost on punk artists, who emerged two years later to remake the rock landscape.

Mr. Myers is the author of "Rock Concert: An Oral History as Told by the Artists, Backstage Insiders and Fans Who Were There" (Grove Press).

SPORTS

JASON GAY

Tom Brady Becomes Most Important Person on TV

Fox lands a legend—whenever his playing career ends, and on that, your guess is as good as mine

Tom Brady is going to make something like a gazillion-jillion dollars talking about football on TV, whenever he stops playing football on TV, because of course he is.

What: Did you think Tom Brady was going to go away?

Did you expect him to retreat from public life, to grow a long, flowing beard and become a recluse who writes unpublished books about trains, and is occasionally photographed midday outside a decaying mansion in a silk TB12 bathrobe, eating almonds and talking to squirrels?

No. Over the past 20 years, there have been four consistencies in American life: death, taxes, complaining about cable news shows, and Tom Brady. Love him, loathe him, fear him, or simply admire his skin care routine, he's one of the most stable relationships all of us have, as reliable as the tides and dogs hating fireworks.

He's not going anywhere, people. Tom Brady is forever.

His contract is with Fox, an outfit that shares common ownership with The Wall Street Journal, which I guess makes Brady, vaguely, a colleague, and potentially, my new best friend. I'm going to give him the space he needs, but if he has any questions, or just wants to know a nice place in Midtown Manhattan to buy an \$18 salad (hold the nightshades!) he knows where to find me.

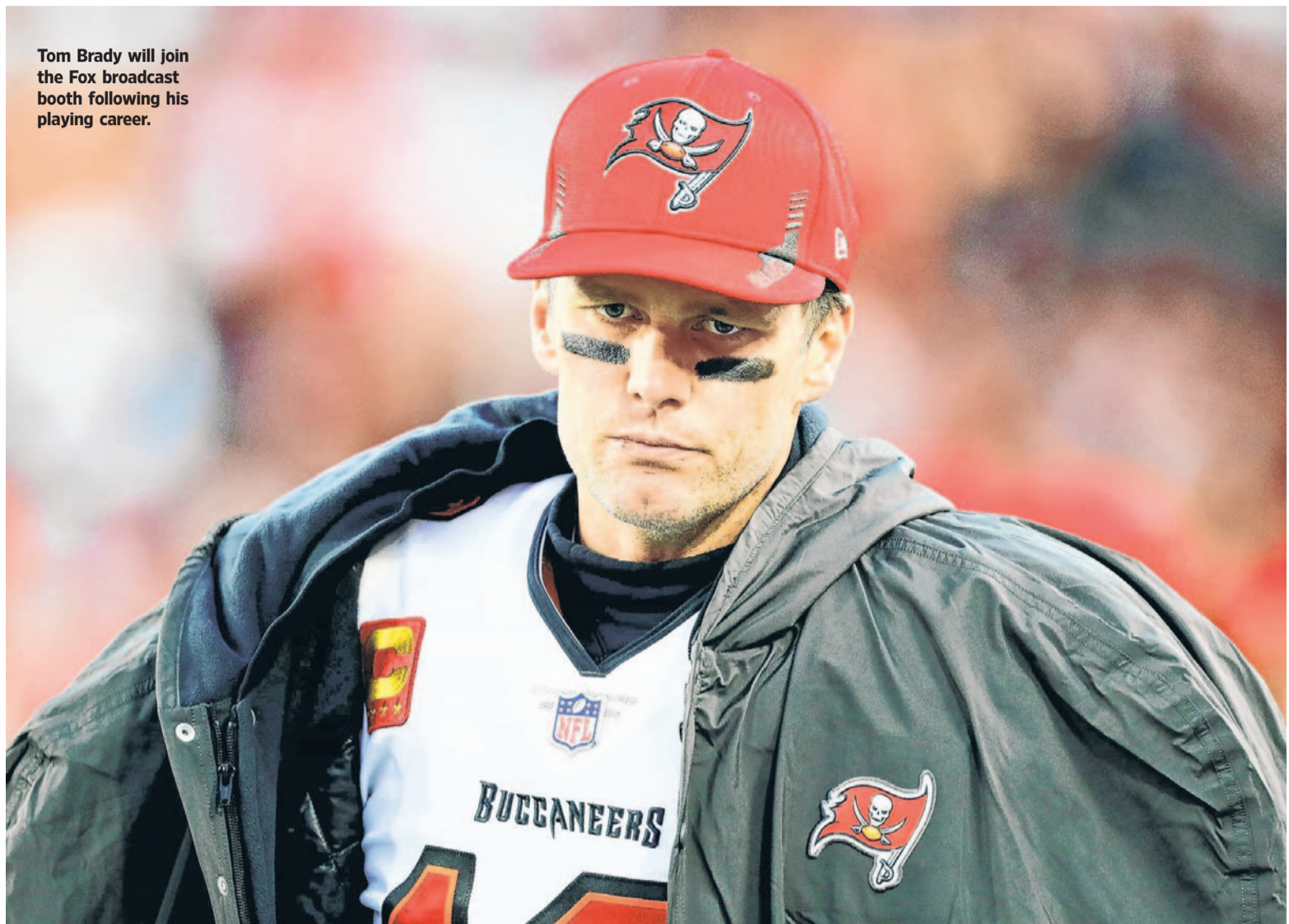
Got it, Tom? You can't see this, but I'm making the "call me" symbol with my hand.

(Last summer, I asked Brady in an interview if he'd consider TV when his playing time was over. "I don't think that appeals to me right now," he said. "I've never had a thought of, like, 'That's what I want to do.'" I believe this makes Brady the first high-profile person in sports to ever change his mind.)

He's a major get, a rebuke to the idea that the biggest sports stars are too big, too rich and too Gulfstreamed for the mortal grind of TV. Superman is coming to the supermarket, as the Mailer-ism goes, and at some point in the future, we will see Brady not in shoulder pads, but in makeup, and perhaps, a branded blazer, trying to convince us, like many before him, that the Lions have a chance on Thanksgiving.

But when? I am concerned that the Fox arrangement claims that Brady will join the booth "immediately following his playing career." Who knows when that day will come? One presumes Brady gave his new employer a top-secret pinkie sign, and I guess it's possible that Brady is on TV as soon as the 2023 season—or, if the Bucs drop out of the playoffs, at next February's Super Bowl, which airs on Fox. However, it's also possible that a man whose career has already worn out all the actuarial tables keeps playing, playing and playing, to the point he not only outlives Fox, but the medium of television, and there's no industry left for him to transition to when he finally hangs up his cleats, in 2091.

Tom Brady will join the Fox broadcast booth following his playing career.



US SANTANA/TAMPA BAY TIMES/ZUMA PRESS

Who knows if we'll even care about football then? We'll probably all be in the metaverse, or on Mars, wrapping space boots for Bezos, or firing off tweets for Musk.

At the moment, though, we still care about football, way too much, which is why this is happening, and how Brady can be enticed to abandon lazy Sundays to a deal that the New York Post's Andrew Marchand reported is \$375 million over 10 years, more money than Brady's made playing football. A Fox spokesperson has said "what has been reported isn't an accurate description of the deal," but I think it's safe to presume Brady is going to be paid very well and will probably be able to expense taxi rides. (I'll also pause right now to remind you that a young Johnny Unitas made \$6 a game to start his career with the semipro Bloomfield Rams, and that Roone Arledge lured Dandy Don Meredith to the booth at ABC for \$30,000.)

That was then, and then some. Today, the NFL is the final trace of

the monoculture, the last thing we watch en masse, and on top of that, it's live, which gives it enormous value and has triggered an absurd gold rush for talent. Amazon has jumped in, goosing the market even more, and other digital players loom. You've seen the spending spree for quarterback

mouths like Tony Romo and Troy Aikman; You've watched the Manning Brothers turn their self-produced football "Wayne's World" into a hit. Forget the Newhouse School: today's most successful broadcasters are groomed under center.

If you've made it this far in the column, you also likely know that announcers don't really move the ratings needle with football audiences—it's about matchups, and if you have the Cowboys playing the Packers in late afternoon, you could

put two peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in headsets and achieve the highest Nielsen of the week.

No one knows this more than the people who program sports television, but they see value in the halo—a big name lifts col-

leagues, advertisers, Wall Street, and entrances the media. (This is the three-millionth piece written about Brady's hiring since Tuesday.) Most importantly, it pleases the NFL, which holds the golden goose and decides what networks will enjoy the pleasure of paying billions for an egg.

Will Brady be any good at TV? For this kind of reported money, you'd hope so. The fear is always that the recently retired pro will be reluctant to dump on his brethren, but today's announcers have already migrated from critical to wonkier approaches. Brady has

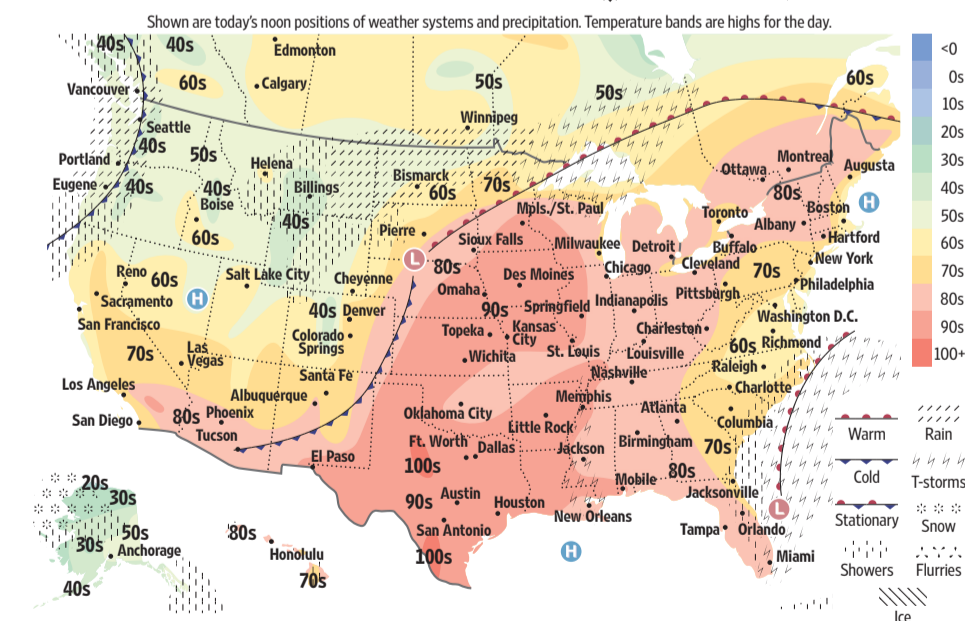
more edge than he let on in New England, where he personified Belichick's dull, *give 'em nothing* Patriots Way, but on the air, all he has to do is show off his brain. If he speaks clearly and points out football arcana like mesh concepts or two-high shell coverages, the nerds are going to lose it.

It's a strange era for sports TV. These are not the louche, mustard-jacket days of Monday Night—programming is scattered across a digital universe to a hard-to-locate audience that increasingly watches on devices or follows via clips on social media. Football is not a mere launchpad to promote other programming—it is the most essential product the networks have, critical to their survival. If you think about it, this makes Tom Brady—not a news anchor, a sitcom star, or a late-night talk show host—the most important man on television, before he's even started working on television.

Of course he's that. You've been watching for years. Tom Brady always wins.

At the moment, we still care about football, way too much, which is why this is happening,

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	51	40	s	49	40	r
Atlanta	80	63	s	75	62	c
Austin	93	68	pc	93	67	pc
Baltimore	72	58	c	72	60	sh
Boise	62	43	pc	61	49	c
Boston	66	54	pc	69	62	pc
Burlington	85	61	s	87	64	c
Charlotte	72	60	pc	73	62	r
Chicago	88	65	pc	86	65	s
Cleveland	80	62	s	79	63	s
Dallas	94	71	pc	93	73	pc
Denver	70	43	s	76	46	s
Detroit	81	60	s	81	60	s
Honolulu	85	73	s	84	72	s
Houston	93	69	s	94	73	pc
Indianapolis	84	62	pc	84	62	c
Kansas City	92	68	pc	83	60	t
Las Vegas	77	60	s	88	70	t
Little Rock	94	72	s	89	70	t
Los Angeles	78	61	s	87	63	s
Miami	83	71	t	87	74	sh
Milwaukee	78	60	pc	77	58	s
Minneapolis	91	67	pc	84	59	pc
Nashville	87	63	s	84	62	pc
New Orleans	89	72	t	84	71	t
New York City	70	58	pc	69	60	sh
Oklahoma City	89	69	pc	87	63	c

International

City	Today			Tomorrow		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	63	53	pc	63	52	pc
Athens	78	62	s	77	61	pc
Baghdad	95	69	pc	92	68	pc
Bangkok	91	80	t	92	81	t
Beijing	58	44	c	72	46	pc
Berlin	70	51	sh	69	51	pc
Brussels	68	47	pc	67	47	pc
Buenos Aires	62	55	pc	65	55	c
Dubai	98	79	s	96	80	s
Dublin	59	47	c	64	46	pc
Edinburgh	57	48	sh	59	48	c

City	Today			Tomorrow		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Frankfurt	75	53	pc	75	50	pc
Geneva	79	55	t	76	55	t
Havana	82	66	s	86	68	s
Hong Kong	84	77	sh	83	75	r
Istanbul	74	56	s	74	55	s
Jakarta	93	78	t	93	78	t
Jerusalem	75	58	s	81	67	c
Johannesburg	71	50	pc	71	53	s
London	65	50	pc	69	49	pc
Madrid	83	57	pc	87	60	pc
Manila	100	83	pc	98	83	t
Melbourne	65	56	sh	65	60	sh
Mexico City	81	52	s	81	56	pc
Milan	81	59	t	81	60	t
Moscow	66	52	pc	65	50	pc
Mumbai	91	86	pc	90	86	pc
Paris	70	50	pc	72	52	pc
Rio de Janeiro	78	71	c	76	71	c
Riyadh	100	77	s	99	77	s
Rome	75	54	s	76	55	pc
San Juan	86	76	c	87	75	pc
Seoul	81	58	pc	76	49	pc
Shanghai	73	62	r	71	58	c
Singapore	90	79	t	89	80	t
Sydney	68	64	sh	72	65	c
Taipei City	86	72	t	80	69	r
Tokyo	72	66	r	72	69	r
Toronto	76	55	pc	75	58	s
Vancouver	52	42	r	56	44	pc
Warsaw	74	51	t	72	52	pc
Zurich	77	57	t	73	55	t

The WSJ Daily Crossword | Edited by Mike Shenk

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE!
By Michael Schlossberg

Across

- Skeptical scoff
- Storybook endings, perhaps
- Scoundrel
- Like every American president (to date)
- Bearded goats
- Talc, on the Mohs scale
- It passes through Greenwich, England
- Gray, maybe
- Hydrogen nucleus
- Funny piece
- Befuddled
- Honest-to-goodness
- "Sorry, lassie"
- Email folder
- Evel Knievel Museum location
- Drastic action
- Employed by
- Dressed for the opera, say
- Emu's cousin
- Supreme Court justices, per the Constitution
- Little twerp
- Come to the surface
- Scarf, say
- Some are made into milk
- "Au contraire!"
- Saloon selection
- Tennis champ nicknamed "The Punisher"
- AOL alternative
- Play structure, of a sort
- Rent
- Iconic Harlem theater
- Skirt length, perhaps

67 "Owner of a Lonely Heart" band

68 Model citizen?

69 Holdings in some banks

Down

- Rapsallion
- Shot spot
- "Hostel" director Roth
- Home of the Sun Devils
- Surrealist Joan
- Final words
- Try again
- Giving the heave-ho
- Grassy expanse
- Govt. ID
- Base for a batch
- Decouple
- Rooibos, by another name
- Wipe out
- Top-notch
- Over
- Get ready to fly
- Villages
- Dexterity exercises
- Boolean operator
- Ran the show
- Shipshape
- Odd-toed ungulate
- Odd-toed ungulates
- Big rig
- Period pieces?
- Regarding
- Pike part
- Smart set?
- With affection
- Parisian palace
- Pago Pago place
- Pen output, perhaps
- Lucre
- Rights org.
- Dealer's box
- Heating choice
- Relevant
- Quaint quarters
- Corp. honcho
- Hang by a thread?

Previous Puzzle's Solution

F	L	A	T	O	N	S	B	A	G	A	S
F	O	R	H	A	U	T	E	U	R	A	L
F	U	D	G	E	F	F	A	A	C	T	T
G	E	A	R	F	I	T	S	E	E	M	E
A	R	I	T	E	S	P	A	S	N	A	I
M	A	N	U	F	F	A	A	C	T	T	U
O	N	E	S	L	I	N	E	O	S		
S	T	S	D	U	D	T	N	I	T	M	C
G	I	F	R	E	T					S	O
O	U	T	O	F	F	A	A	C	T	T	I
C	N	E	T			S	U	C	H		S
A	S	A	M	I			G	E	S		K
S	T	R	E	T			H	I	S		T
I	O		R	E	T		O	O	L	S	R
O	P		Y	E	S		W	O	K		E

► Solve this puzzle online and discuss it at [WSJ.com/Puzzles](https://www.wsj.com/puzzles).

OPINION

A Fence for the Supreme Court?



WONDERLAND
By Daniel Henninger

The Supreme Court of the United States—from its first meeting in February 1790 through the Civil War, two world wars and the battle for civil rights—has never been protected by an 8-foot wire fence. It is now. On Monday the Senate voted unanimously to extend police protection to the justices' immediate family. What has happened to us?

Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts stood outside the court last week shouting herself hoarse in rage over the prospect of the court overturning 1973's abortion decision in *Roe v. Wade*. Since the weekend protesters filled streets outside the homes of Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Brett Kavanaugh and Samuel Alito.

It is becoming difficult to identify any corner of American life that has not become unhinged from what once were considered normal restraints on behavior, personal or political.

The reason phone calls and texts from conservatives poured into the Trump White House during the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol was that the mob's rage so obviously exceeded the norms of political protest in Washington. That then-President Donald Trump sat for hours in silence at this sight was an abdication of responsibility cut from the same cloth as Senate

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer standing outside the Supreme Court in 2020 and yelling at Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh: "You have released the whirlwind and you will pay the price. You won't know what hit you if you go forward with these awful decisions."

If leaders at the highest levels of American governance are willing to live at the brink of violence, no surprise that so many others at every level think: I can do whatever I want.

Examples arrive daily. The CEO of New Era baseball caps allegedly tried to settle an argument Saturday with someone outside a Buffalo, N.Y., restaurant by driving his car at him.

No recent event more galvanized a country numbed by behavioral excess than Will Smith, an until-then respected actor, strolling out of his seat at the Academy Awards to slap down Chris Rock. In a rare act of pushback, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences banned him from the Oscars for 10 years.

Not long after, no surprise, comedian Dave Chappelle was attacked onstage in Los Angeles by an audience member.

Smash-and-grab robberies during store hours—once nonexistent—are commonplace. A significant event in this descent remains the 2020 Democratic National Convention, where not one speaker criticized the looting that accompanied the George Floyd protests that summer.

Mindlessly unrestrained shootings and assaults, often

of bystanders, are a constant on big-city streets.

A sign painted last weekend on the wall of a pro-life organization in Madison, Wis., said: "If abortions aren't safe then you aren't either."

American life today seems to be constantly at—or over—the brink of violence. That violence will be an issue in the November elections. How

How did America become a country always on the brink of political violence?

could it not be? Which means Democratic candidates again are on defense about crime. One may ask: How did the Democrats, going back to the late 1960s, become the soft-on-crime party? Dave Chappelle wonders. Days after he was attacked onstage, his lawyer said, "It's a travesty of justice that [District Attorney George] Gascón is refusing to prosecute this case as a felony."

We'll skip over the past 50 years of U.S. social history to focus on how this November's law-and-order election extends from the streets of L.A. to the front steps of the Supreme Court. One answer: by defining responsibility downward. Progressive prosecutors elected in a multitude of U.S. cities call their theory of justice "decriminalization." What could go wrong with taking the crime out of acts of crime? Other than everything.

Historians of what happened

in these years should consider Sen. Schumer a case study in how politics passed from mediation to nonstop confrontation. In 2017 left-wing protesters massed for days in front of Sen. Schumer's Brooklyn, N.Y., home, and again in 2021. Faced as well with the prospect of a primary challenge from Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the once-liberal majority leader virtually overnight became a man of the left, in March 2020 abandoning the floor of the Senate to stand on the sidewalk in front of the Supreme Court shouting threats at two justices. That in large part is how our politics degraded.

The Supreme Court may well decide in the Mississippi *Dobbs* case to return abortion policy to the states. Instead of joining the political debate over the details of pregnancy, abortion and birth in the five decades of medical science's developments after *Roe v. Wade*, Democrats are resurrecting the "days of rage" from the 1960s.

Rather than maintain a broad, common understanding about personal limits, the left pushed American social and political life toward a state of nature, with many today assuming few if any limits on what they're allowed to do.

Solutions? Democratic Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois offered one last week: "There's an answer. The answer is in November." He was talking about a referendum on the Supreme Court. Voters likely will have a larger definition of the problem on Nov. 8.

Write henninger@wsj.com.

BOOKSHELF | By Elliot Kaufman

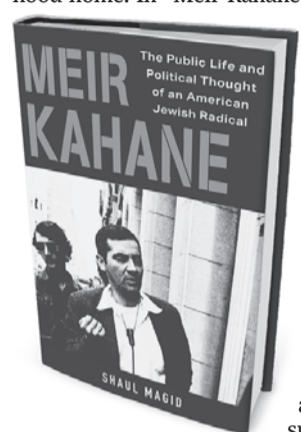
American Militant

Meir Kahane

By Shaul Magid
(Princeton, 276 pages, \$35)

‘Is This Any Way for Nice Jewish Boys to Behave?’ The question was posed by the Jewish Defense League and its founder, Meir Kahane, in a cheeky 1969 ad. The meaning is made clear by the JDL logo: a raised fist punching out from a Star of David, and by the ad's accompanying text: "Maybe in times of crisis, Jewish boys should not be that nice. Maybe—just maybe—nice people build their own road to Auschwitz."

Kahane was born and raised in Brooklyn, the latest in a line of Orthodox rabbis. He studied at the serious Mir Yeshiva for 13 years, and was a favorite of the head rabbi, but emerged with anything but the traditional political quietism. Unusually, his father was a right-wing Zionist, hosting that movement's founder, Vladimir Jabotinsky, at Kahane's childhood home. In "Meir Kahane: The Public Life and Political



Thought of an American Jewish Radical," Dartmouth's Shaul Magid traces Kahane's intellectual evolution.

Convinced of and indebted to principles of toleration, Jews had been America's most loyal liberal voters. Yet Kahane burst onto the scene in 1968 arguing that liberalism now placed Jews in peril. Downscale, urban Jewish communities were endangered by black militancy, crime and anti-Semitism, Kahane asserted, while intermarriage and assimilation threatened the survival of the Jewish people.

His program was to instill Jewish pride and defend his people by any means necessary. The JDL began by sending men with baseball bats to a Jewish cemetery in the Bronx, where they scared away the annual Halloween vandals. "We Jews have an image; we don't hit back," Kahane said. He was determined to change that. Before long, the JDL threatened to break the bones of a black militant if he showed up to speak at a Reform Jewish temple. (He didn't.)

Kahane saw himself as fighting "local Hitlers," an attitude that eventually, Mr. Magid explains, "turned the JDL from civilian guardians to bomb makers and arms smugglers." By the early 1970s, every major Jewish organization had denounced the JDL. The Anti-Defamation League informed on its members to the FBI.

Kahane subjected the "Jewish establishment" to a radical critique. His view on why many young Jews were attracted to the New Left: "the kind of Jewishness they were raised in is a sham, a fraud, and a hypocrisy," he said. "All bar and no mitzvah." He denounced the ideology of *sha shtil* (shh, quiet) and the "Uncle Irvings" who promulgated it. "Let them leave their comfortable homes in Scarsdale," an affluent Jewish suburb of New York, "and come live in areas of Brooklyn that we patrol, and then let them give us their opinion."

Kahane considered himself an honest opponent of black anti-Semitism; Mr. Magid considers him a racist. He certainly had no time for talk of guilt or reparations. "Most Jews came here in galleys long after blacks were freed," Kahane said. "Blacks deserve nothing from us and that is what they will get." The author diagnoses "an unwillingness to recognize the extent to which Jews benefited from white privilege." That may sound anachronistic, but "check your privilege" was essentially the response of John Lindsay, New York's WASP mayor from 1966 to '73, to outer-borough Jews as their communities suffered violence. In New York and elsewhere, Jewish neighborhoods were selected for disastrous public-housing experiments precisely because of a reputation for liberalism.

Tracing the ideas of Meir Kahane, who founded the Jewish Defense League in New York and later became a flashpoint in Israeli politics.

The chapter on communism is the book's best. It tells a contained, chronological story, and grounds Kahane's ideas in his real-world actions. "By late 1969," Mr. Magid writes, the JDL had become the "militant arm" of the movement to free Soviet Jewry, who were persecuted for their faith. The JDL harassed Soviet diplomats, crashed meetings, vandalized offices and held wildly successful rallies practicing civil disobedience, but also escalated to more serious violence. After receiving a suspended sentence for conspiring to manufacture explosives, Kahane moved to Israel in 1971. The JDL he left behind degenerated into a murderous gang.

The Jewish diaspora was doomed, Kahane decided. His new project was founding Kach, a hardline Israeli political party. Convinced that Arab nationalism and anti-Semitism would never yield, Kahane advocated the expulsion of all Arab-Israelis and the criminalization of Jewish-gentile sexual relations. He attacked liberal Zionism as un-Jewish, hypocritical and suicidal. "I understand the Arabs. And they understand me," he said in a 1985 debate with Alan Dershowitz. "And neither of us can understand Professor Dershowitz."

On his third try, Kahane won 1.2% of the vote and a single seat in the 1984 Israeli election. In response, the Knesset amended Israel's Basic Laws to ban racist parties. Frozen out, Kahane developed an eschatological politics in which the fate of the world depended urgently on exacting revenge on God's enemies and purifying Israel of all non-Jewish influences. In 1990, an al Qaeda-linked terrorist assassinated Kahane, perhaps the group's first U.S. victim, on a trip to Manhattan.

Remarkably, from this wild trajectory, Mr. Magid concludes, "Meir Kahane was a quintessential American Jew." "Not just a curious footnote" in American Jewish history, Kahane has "hypnotized us" and U.S. Jews "have absorbed more of his worldview than we think," Mr. Magid contends. The Jewish mainstream parts ways only on the use of violence in the diaspora—"at least for now," grants Mr. Magid.

Politics cloud the author's judgment. On issues of solidarity, Kahane was not so much influential as prescient. Intermarriage has become the norm for non-Orthodox Jews, weakening attachments. Violence really did upend the maps of big U.S. cities, as Jews were pushed out of their neighborhoods.

Most of all, Mr. Magid misses Kahane's uniqueness as an American Jewish phenomenon. There is no one remotely like Kahane on the political scene today. And if he is "the Jewish Panther," there has been no Jewish Malcolm X or even Jesse Jackson or Al Sharpton. Jewish energies have been invested largely in individual and family advancement, not group advancement via militancy and street politics. From this can be traced the community's greatest successes but also its greatest shortcomings. It is why Kahane remains a footnote in the American Jewish story, for better and for worse.

Mr. Kaufman is the Journal's letters editor.

Biden Casts Himself as the Inflation Hero

By Karl Rove

President Biden on Tuesday delivered the first salvo of his re-engineered midterm message. Declaring that fighting inflation will be "my top domestic priority," he said the two leading causes of rising prices are "a one-in-a-century pandemic" and "Mr. Putin's war in Ukraine." But that isn't accurate.

Inflation's principal cause is too much government spending—specifically, last year's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan. President Bill Clinton's Treasury secretary, Larry Summers, warned then that "there was a chance" its passage "will set off inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation." He was right, and we're all paying higher prices as a result.

Having previously declared that "Milton Friedman isn't running the show anymore," the president likely disagrees with the late economist's observation that "inflation is caused by too much money chasing after too few goods." But voters instinctively know that Mr. Biden's reckless spending is why inflation hit 8.3% in April. Sixty-one percent of voters disapprove of Mr. Biden's handling of the economy, while only 36% approve, according to a Fox News poll conducted April 28 to May 1. His numbers are even worse on his handling of inflation: 67% disapprove and 28% approve.

The big problem for Mr. Biden is that on these issues independents think more like Republicans than like Democrats. While 68% of Democrats approve of the president's handling of the economy, only 9% of Republicans and 30% of independents do. A mere 23% of independents approve of his handling of inflation, along with 7% of Republicans and a slim 54% majority of Democrats.

Mr. Biden's Tuesday speech offered little to bring disillusioned swing voters to his side. He tried shifting blame, saying the Federal Reserve had the "primary role in fighting inflation" without acknowledging that his policies are a major reason the Fed had to swing into action. The president also suggested he's done a lot on energy costs by releasing oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (which didn't substantially reduce oil prices), allowing the use of biofuels this summer (driving up corn prices), and proposing "landmark investments" in clean energy that can't even pass a Democratic Congress. Americans remember Mr. Biden's anti-oil-and-gas rhetoric as a candidate and can see his continued hostility toward fossil fuels as president. They understand that Democrats won't help ramp up domestic oil and gas production, which would increase supply, putting downward pressure on prices.

Mr. Biden then contrasted what he said was each party's

approach to curing inflation. The president claimed he had laid out specific proposals "focused on lowering costs for the average family." But Build Back Better, the legislation to which he seemed to allude, carried gigantic tax increases, a huge official price tag and hinky maneuvers to hide its true costs. The inflation ravaging families—especially those with modest wages or fixed incomes—can't be cured by raising taxes and spending even more money.

He blamed everyone from Putin to the Fed for high prices, but voters won't buy it.

The president also used the speech to go on offense. Pointing to proposals offered by a single senator, Rick Scott (R., Fla.), Mr. Biden claimed Republicans want to increase taxes on the middle class and "put Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid on the chopping block."

The problem for Mr. Biden's claim is that Mr. Scott's proposed agenda fell with a thud in the GOP Senate Caucus, so no Republican is bound to it. GOP candidates are therefore free to say they won't raise taxes on anyone—unlike Mr. Biden, who has committed himself to gigantic tax increases—and that they'll oppose additional

spending while protecting Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, backing their pledge with stories about friends and family who depend on these programs.

Mr. Biden also asserted on Tuesday that he is a deficit cutter—which is already drawing guffaws. "The actions of the administration and Congress have undoubtedly resulted in higher deficits," said Dan White of Moody's Analytics. Even a CNN "fact checker" touted an expert who called the assertion "almost bizarre world." Annual deficits have gone down under Mr. Biden compared with his predecessor, but only because Congress didn't repeat 2020's Covid relief packages (which Mr. Biden didn't oppose as a candidate). Deficits would have decreased much more if Mr. Biden hadn't gone on such a spending spree.

Mr. Biden's eminently forgettable address didn't change the political fundamentals. So it's likely that more Democratic candidates will seek further distance from Mr. Biden as they scramble to salvage their political fortunes. If November's election is dominated by the inflation question, many of them won't make it. Nothing Mr. Biden said Tuesday changed that.

Mr. Rove helped organize the political-action committee *American Crossroads* and is author of "The Triumph of William McKinley" (Simon & Schuster, 2015).

New York Leads America off an Energy Cliff

By Claudia Tenney

The Biden administration blames the energy crisis on Vladimir Putin and America's energy producers. In reality, it's the result of a failed approach that pursues unattainable green-energy goals instead of realistic ones. If this approach continues, costs will keep skyrocketing while dependence on foreign sources increases. That's what happened in my home state.

Large portions of New York sit atop massive but untapped sources of natural gas. The Utica Shale stretches from my congressional district into Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland and Ohio. It contains 38 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, 940 million barrels of oil and 208 million barrels of natural-gas liquids.

But we can't touch these rich resources. A 2014 decision by then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo, codified by the state Legislature in 2021, banned

hydraulic fracturing in New York, which has been proved to lower emissions compared with other forms of oil and gas extraction.

Mr. Cuomo also halted the construction of numerous interstate gas pipelines and closed the Indian Point nuclear plant, all while failing to provide an achievable path

Biden is following Andrew Cuomo's example, with predictable results.

for sustainable energy production. New York continues to consume vast amounts of natural gas, but we have to import it, often at higher cost.

At a time when Gov. Kathy Hochul should be working to unleash New York's energy resources, she is doing the oppo-

site by fighting for new costly and unrealistic energy mandates. One proposal, guaranteed to raise costs on low- and middle-income families, is for a blanket ban on natural gas hookups in new homes.

As our state government kneels to radical activists, other parts of the nation have thrived. Domestic energy exploration has produced higher incomes and prosperity in neighboring Pennsylvania, but not in New York, where out-migration rates and energy costs are among the nation's highest.

Washington's current strategy is straight from the Cuomo-Hochul playbook. President Biden has done all he can to quash the oil and gas sector and put an end to domestic exploration. After canceling the Keystone XL pipeline and issuing a moratorium on energy production on federal lands and waters, the administration ramped up energy imports from Russia by

34%. Abroad, its lax policies toward Russia's Nord Stream 2 left Europe even more vulnerable to Mr. Putin's natural-gas coercion.

As the administration spurns domestic production, it has failed to articulate a serious alternative. Such a shortsighted approach will yield the same result nationally as it has in New York. As demand for energy remains steady and domestic supplies are cut off, the cost of living rises, good jobs disappear, and our reliance on imported energy increases.

That's why New York's war on energy should be a canary in the coal mine—a warning to every American who yearns for prosperity, security and lower energy prices. If our nation doesn't flip the script on New York's failed playbook, it risks a similar fate.

Ms. Tenney, a Republican, represents New York's 22nd Congressional District.

OPINION

REVIEW & OUTLOOK

Inflation Stays in the Heights

The “transitory” inflation crowd took another beating on Wednesday, as April’s expected decline in the rate of increase in the consumer-price index (CPI) turned out to be disappointing. If this means we’ve reached “peak” inflation, we’re merely fallen from Mount Everest to K2.

The pace of inflation slowed 0.3% in the month, but most of that was due to a 6.1% decline in gasoline prices. That is already out of date as gas prices have since rebounded to hit a new record this week. The CPI rose 8.3% over the last 12 months, which was down slightly from 8.5% in March. But the inflation rate over the last three months is 9.9%. If inflation is slowing, it’s hard to detect.

The more important news may be that the “core” inflation rate, sans food and energy, rose 0.6% in April, faster than in March and February. It has now climbed 6.2% in the last year. Consumers don’t eat or drive based on “core” prices in any case, and food prices are up 9.4% over the last year.

Also notable is that service prices seem to be accelerating. Non-energy services rose 0.7% in the month, thanks to an especially big 3.1% increase from transportation. Air fares rose 18.6% in April, the largest one-month increase in the index since the Labor Department began tracking it in 1963. Lodging away from home, including hotels and motels, rose 2% in the month and is up 22.6% in a year. That family vacation is going to be a lot more expensive this summer. Bring a tent.

Recall that the transitory crowd said goods inflation was caused by supply-chain issues related to the pandemic and would ease over time. Ris-

ing inflation in services shows that it has spread across most of the economy and is becoming embedded in business pricing and expectations.

That makes inflation harder for the Federal Reserve to reduce without even tighter monetary policy.

The good news, limited though it is, was that real average hourly earnings for all workers fell only 0.1% in April. But real hourly wages have nonetheless fallen for seven straight months, and are down 2.6% over the last year. Average weekly earnings are down even more—3.4%—thanks to a decline in the average workweek. Nominal wage gains are vanishing thanks to inflation.

The bad inflation report turned what looked like a rally in equities on Wednesday into another down day. Investors are probably concluding that with “peak” inflation more durable than expected, the Fed may have to raise interest rates even higher than it has estimated. That increases the odds of recession unless the Fed loses its anti-inflation nerve.

All of this exposes the fantasy that the Biden-Pelosi-Schumer policy mix of blowout spending and easy money is good for working Americans. Modern monetary theory combined with new entitlements were supposed to produce record growth and security. Instead they have produced the highest inflation in 40 years and a falling standard of living. We should add that Donald Trump’s excessive spending at the end of 2020 also didn’t help.

Americans learned this lesson the hard way in the 1970s, and a new generation is having to learn it again. The rich will be fine, but the middle class is paying the bill.

The policy mix of blowout spending and easy money is punishing workers.

The Treasury Secretary ignores the value of lost human capital.

Janet Yellen on Abortion and the Economy

Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visited the Senate on Tuesday to answer questions about risks to financial stability such as inflation, rising interest rates and volatile asset prices. But Democrats were more interested in her views on the risk that the Supreme Court might overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The exchange wasn’t helpful to their cause.

“What impact will the loss of abortion access mean economically for women?” New Jersey Sen. Bob Menendez asked Ms. Yellen. She replied with a reductionist economic argument: “I believe eliminating the right of women to make decisions about when and whether to have children would have very damaging effects on the economy and would set women back by decades.”

She added: “*Roe v. Wade* and access to reproductive health care including abortion helped lead to increased labor force participation” of women and “research also shows that it had a favorable impact on the well-being and earnings of children.”

South Carolina Republican Tim Scott rejoined: “Did you say that ending the life of a child is good for the labor force participation rate?” Ms. Yellen demurred but warned that restricting abortion would limit women’s ability to “plan lives that are fulfilling and satisfying” and lead to more unwanted children especially by black

women, “who will grow up in poverty and do worse themselves.”

Putting the difficult moral choice of abortion in such utilitarian terms won’t win over many converts. But even on those narrow terms, Ms. Yellen ignores some economic facts.

The link between abortion access and women’s labor force participation is more tenuous than she suggests. Women’s labor participation was rising for decades before *Roe* and continued to climb until the early 2000s amid cultural changes. Abortion rates have also fallen by half since 1980, and teen pregnancy rates have plunged by two-thirds since 1990 amid increased access to contraception. Far more than access to abortion influences the life and work choices of women.

More fundamental, Ms. Yellen overlooks the lost productive contribution of children who were never born. People are assets, the source of inventions and new businesses. Human capital is crucial to economic growth and a dynamic society. China has abandoned its one-child policy, which sometimes included coerced abortions, because it foresees a declining population in the years ahead.

Abortion is a fraught moral issue, which is why it ought to be settled democratically, rather than by judicial fiat. But its consequences can’t be measured by lifetime earnings or the labor participation rate.

The Mastriano Pileup in Pennsylvania

President Trump won the Republican primary in 2016 by taking roughly a third of the vote, while his squabbling opponents from the traditional GOP split the rest. Next week Pennsylvania state Sen. Doug Mastriano might pull off the same trick in the primary for Governor, and Democrats couldn’t be happier to help him do it.

Mr. Mastriano is a long shot in November. He’s a 2020 stolen-election theorist who wants to end Pennsylvania’s contracts with “compromised voting machine companies.” He reportedly organized buses to take people to Mr. Trump’s rally on Jan. 6, 2021. Although he said he left when the rioting began, the Philadelphia Inquirer says video “appears to show Mastriano and his wife walking through breached police barricades.” Last month he spoke at an event featuring QAnon nonsense.

A poll by Fox News last week put Mr. Mastriano at 29% support among Republican primary voters. That’s a plurality only because below him there’s an eight-car pileup. Former Rep. Lou Barletta was at 17%, former U.S. Attorney Bill McSwain at 13%, businessman Dave White at 11%, and state Senate leader Jake Corman at 5%. Four others were in single digits. GOP bigwigs are now frantically trying to unite those factions by getting unviable candidates to drop out and endorse a consensus pick.

This will probably work about as well as it did in 2016 against Mr. Trump, which is to say, it won’t. It’s hard for any candidate to throw in the towel after putting in months of sweat and asking donors to contribute. Mr. Barletta is in second, so he’s unlikely to quit. Mr. McSwain is anti-endorsed by Mr. Trump, who called the former U.S. Attorney a “coward” for doing “absolutely nothing” on voter fraud. “Bill McSwain is staying in the race,” his team said Tuesday.

Mr. White has invested millions of his own money, which might be sunk cost, but he understandably wants to get to primary day. Mr. Corman is scheduled Thursday to join Mr. Barletta

for a “major announcement,” but even if he tries to shift all his support, it’s only 5%, not enough to make the difference on its own.

The likely Democratic nominee is Attorney General Josh Shapiro, whose latest TV ad reveals his view of the GOP field. His commercial calls Mr. Mastriano “one of Donald Trump’s strongest supporters,” saying

that he “led the fight to audit the 2020 election” and “wrote the heartbeat bill in Pennsylvania” to help “outlaw abortion.” Mr. Mastriano doesn’t have the campaign cash to bombard television viewers, so Mr. Shapiro is trying to help him get the nomination.

If Republicans go for it, Tuesday’s primary could be the start of another Trumpian backfire. Pennsylvania Republicans want voting reforms, and the GOP state Legislature passed some that were promptly vetoed by Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf. If primary voters want those bills signed, their job is to pick a conservative who can win the general election. A recent poll by Osage Research said Pennsylvania swing voters preferred a Republican Governor, 42% to 39%.

But asked about a race between Mr. Shapiro and Mr. Mastriano, the Democrat was up 49% to 41%. The pollster said it involved “Mastriano losing an astounding 23% of the swing Republicans to Shapiro. This is an unsustainable number for a general election nominee for a party.” Those are the figures while Democrats are running TV ads to help Mr. Mastriano. What about when they begin really going after him?

With Mr. Mastriano at the top of the ticket, many Republicans fear a washout could also cost them control of the Legislature or the crucial Senate seat now held by Republican Pat Toomey, who is retiring.

Political primaries are about campaign promises and ideology, but also temperament and electability. Pennsylvania Republicans will regret it if their party throws away another winnable election and delivers four more years of vetoes by another Democratic Governor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Are Diplomats Ready to Defend U.S. Interests?

As a 31-year veteran of the Foreign Service, I am dismayed by the suggestion that passing the Foreign Service Officer Test would no longer be a requirement for recruitment into our diplomatic corps (“In Defense of the Foreign Service Test” by Dave Seminara, op-ed, May 3). Most countries have a multiyear diplomatic academy, where prospective diplomats learn their trade before being sent overseas to represent their country and defend its interests. The U.S. Foreign Service conducts only a six-week orientation program.

Removing the requirement to pass the exam is predicated on the idea that anyone can be a diplomat. But a foreign-service officer must be able to demonstrate an understanding of U.S. culture, history, institutions and national interests. We need to be more stringent in selecting our diplomats, not less.

JEREMY BRENNER
Silver Spring, Md.

Having passed the test in the 1950s, served abroad in the 1960s and consulted on foreign affairs ever since, I can tell you that the role is remarkably close to that of a hotel concierge. You ensure that potentially useful information gets to Washington and that visitors from Washington get to their appointments on time.

In short, the old test and the new one are all wrong for the duties a foreign-service officer performs. The best who enter the Foreign Service soon leave for other jobs where their imaginations and ideas can be used. The same cannot be said of how the State Department employs that talent.

GODFREY HARRIS
Los Angeles

Dave Seminara notes that the duration and difficulty of the exam have declined since it was introduced almost a century ago. It did not take long after that, however, for applicants to find a way to cope, namely by attending a cram course such as Angus McDonald Crawford’s.

According to one who took it, “there was a duel to the death between Crawford” and Joseph Green, the head of foreign-service examiners, who “took fiendish delight in making [the exams] as nearly impossible as he could.” At that point, Crawford had Green on the ropes, but a year or two later, Green concocted, and the Foreign Service adopted, a type of exam that proved to be cram-proof. Crawford died, it was said, of a broken heart.

That aspiring foreign-service officers have continued to find ways around the entrance test does credit to the quality one most wants to see in a diplomat: resourcefulness.

PROF. KENNETH WEISBRODE
Bilkent University
Ankara, Turkey

Let’s use the exam to screen political nominees for ambassadorships. This might eliminate the most unqualified political hacks, whose complete unsuitability would be exposed to the world. Perhaps some with particularly low scores might be shamed into turning down the nomination, allowing a qualified person to be appointed, or the host country could refuse to accredit a potential ambassador if it was publicly shown that the potential ambassador was, in essence, a joke.

MICHAEL G. BRAUTIGAM
Tallinn, Estonia

Fairness Triumphs Over Reality in Higher Ed

In his letter to the editor (May 7), Eric Johnson suggests universities charge art and English majors more than engineering majors to solve the student-debt problem. An excellent economics-based solution. Almost a decade ago, I was appointed to a committee at my university to study tuition. As at most universities, there was a push to increase the number of STEM majors. I suggested we lower the tuition for majors we wanted to encourage and raise the tuition for those we wanted to discourage. My colleagues on the committee were appalled. They pointed out that STEM majors usually made more than arts and humanities majors, so doing that would be unfair.

As usual in my dealing with campus politics, I saw an inability to rec-

ognize a problem and address it forthrightly. Instead, the issue of fairness dominated the discussion.

I once headed a committee to look at faculty salaries. At the time, our study revealed that English faculty were being paid at about 90% of their market value, nursing faculty a little ahead of their market and business faculty a whopping 33% behind their market. Nevertheless, business faculty on average had much higher salaries than English or nursing faculty. I asked who was making the biggest sacrifice to be at our university. Of course my colleagues in English and nursing claimed they were, and argued for equal salaries across disciplines.

EM. PROF. ROBERT ROSENMAN
Washington State University
Pullman, Wash.

Medicine Can Do Better and Keep Standards

In “Keep Politics Out of the Doctor’s Office” (op-ed, April 19), Stanley Goldfarb writes that medical schools are lowering admissions standards for race-based reasons and that medical scientific studies are being similarly debased. This is untrue at Harvard, where I work. I suspect it isn’t true elsewhere either.

Healthcare disparities are a fact, first established definitively in 2003 by the congressionally ordered Institute of Medicine compendium “Un-

equal Treatment.” I have been studying disparate care for over 15 years. The two primary drivers that I have seen are socioeconomic determinants and subconscious bias, to which we are all subject.

Both can be counteracted, but Dr. Goldfarb apparently has no interest in that, instead concentrating on inflammatory racial dramatics. His op-ed evinces no sense that medicine, as Louis Sullivan says, “is the delivery of scientific knowledge and expertise given in a social context,” or that our medical schools are capable of incorporating the social dimension of treating illness in the medical curriculum.

PROF. AUGUSTUS A. WHITE III
Harvard Medical School
Boston

Free Trade With China Is Not Worth the Moral Price

Your editorial “Republicans for Border Taxes” (May 7) argues that tariffs against Chinese goods hurt Americans. But free trade with authoritarian regimes is never free.

As long as “Chinese suppliers are the only source of some materials and goods,” we will find ourselves dependent on placating China despite its aggression, let alone its unfair trade practices. It is never in our best interest to save money by supporting those who destroy a free press, kill critics, imprison religious minorities and abduct our own residents.

I support free trade with any democracy. As for trade with China, I’d support at least 25% tariffs. Let’s get our companies to develop suppliers throughout the world in countries that honor and protect the rights and liberties of their citizens and ours.

REV. ANTHONY TANG
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Promotion for Biden-Yellen?

Regarding your editorial “Spare America From Yellen’s Global Tax” (May 9): It’s incomprehensible to me that we would allow a group of people who have not made one correct domestic economic decision to decide tax policy for the world.

MAURICE NAGLE
Daniel Island, S.C.

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.



“You have reached Efficiency Consultants. All our agents are busy now. Why aren’t you?”

OPINION

Dispatches From the Mariupol Siege

By Jillian Kay Melchior

A photograph shows Bohdan Krotevych in a helmet and fatigues, looking weary but peaceful. The big-eyed dog that sits beside him in the picture was later “killed by a Russian mine,” he says. “Kids and women are dying. They are being killed and raped. . . . It’s hell in Mariupol. . . . It’s difficult for me to talk about it.”

Mr. Krotevych, 29, is chief of staff of the Azov Regiment, a unit of Ukraine’s National Guard. Since late April he has periodically sent me text messages from the bombed-out southeastern city, which now resembles Grozny or Aleppo. But Mariupol hasn’t entirely fallen. Surrounded and outgunned, Mr. Krotevych and his “brothers in arms,” as he puts it, have refused to surrender.

Vladimir Putin covets Mariupol for its prime location. Before the war, commodities from eastern and southern Ukraine were shipped to the global market through this port city on the Sea of Azov. A key highway route runs through Mariupol that could link Russian territory with occupied Crimea.

‘It’s hell,’ says Bohdan Krotevych as his regiment makes its stand at the Azovstal steel plant.

The city has also taken on symbolic significance. “How can the second strongest army in the world not be able to capture a city defended by 2,000 service people for over two months now?” Mr. Krotevych says. “Azov has dealt too heavy a blow to Putin’s ego and, at the same time, showed Ukraine that we can overcome the overwhelming forces of the enemy.”

The Azov Regiment is known for its courage—and controversy. U.S. media has reported that some members espoused neo-Nazi ideology, a claim the Kremlin has taken up. I asked Mr. Krotevych about the unit’s reputation. “Like in other units, including military units of the U.S. army, there are some individuals who hold Nazi views,” he says. But labeling the entire regiment neo-Nazi “is like calling all Americans racist because the KKK exists in the U.S.” He adds that extremists have been “dishonorably discharged without the right to wear the uniform or chevron.”

The regiment is now making its last stand at the Azovstal steel plant



Bohdan Krotevych

in Mariupol. The structure offers significant protection against tank rounds, artillery and aerial bombs; built to handle molten metal, it also has extensive bunkers. “It’s a wonderful place to defend and a very difficult place to take if it’s held by determined defenders, as this one is,” says Fred Kagan, director of the Critical Threats Project at the American Enterprise Institute.

The heavy fighting has precluded much of the foreign press from reporting on the ground in Mariupol, and disinformation abounds. To prove his whereabouts and identity, Mr. Krotevych sent me video of himself outside the plant. Ukraine’s Ministry of Internal Affairs reviewed the footage and confirmed it was him. Storyful, a social-media intelligence service owned by News Corp, the Journal’s parent company, matched the background in his video with other images of the steel plant.

Conditions there are dire, Mr. Krotevych says. The wounded have been “literally rotting away because of the underground conditions, humidity, and unsanitary conditions,” he said in mid-April. “The injuries are grave: amputated limbs, torn-out muscles, lacerations, serious burns.” He couldn’t comment on remaining food and ammunition supplies, but medications like painkillers are “in critically small amounts.”

Mr. Krotevych also said in late April that more than 300 civilians were taking shelter in the plant, including women, children and a 4-month-old baby. He described how

they huddled below ground in terror of the shelling and the prospect that the Russians could use white phosphorus munitions, which can melt flesh and burn to the bone. Since then, many civilians have been evacuated from the plant.

These departures, along with any fatalities among the Ukrainian soldiers, may prolong the siege; food, water and other supplies last longer among the few who remain.

The siege is agonizing for Mr. Krotevych’s parents and his sister, Sandra, 33. “I used to think that in Ukraine, people were valued,” she says. “It’s unprofessional to wait until the military dies because there is a lack of food, water, medicine. That’s what the Ukrainian government is doing now.” She says she feels “very angry with the inaction of our government, and also with the indifference of the world leaders who let it happen.”

Prospects of a negotiated rescue for the soldiers are slim. The Ukrainian fighters’ stand in Mariupol has pinned down Russian troops and prevented them from joining other battles in southern and eastern Ukraine, so there’s a strategic reason for them to remain. Meanwhile, Mr. Putin wants to give the Russian public a flashy military victory in Mariupol and therefore is likely loath to show any mercy to the soldiers there. Even if Kyiv and Moscow could agree on a humanitarian corridor for the soldiers in the steel plant, the troops may not trust it. In an infamous incident in 2014,

Russians ambushed and massacred Ukrainian fighters in Ilovaisk after promising them safe passage.

A military rescue appears even less likely. The Russians control large areas around Mariupol, so “that would be a major, major offensive on behalf of the Ukrainian forces” and could come at the expense of other strategic priorities, says Mason Clark, a senior analyst and Russia team lead at the Institute for the Study of War.

“It’s likely that these guys will probably all die, and the only thing that can be said is, I think, Ukrainian children will be memorizing their names for generations,” Mr. Kagan says.

“The Russians have given them few choices, because the defenders have no reason to think that if they surrender, the Russians will do anything other than torture and kill them. And in that circumstance, most people will choose to die fighting rather than surrender. I don’t think the Ukrainians will be able to break the encirclement or end the siege before these guys are finally overcome.”

I ask Mr. Krotevych about the bleak outlook. At the steel plant, he says, “our attitude is spirited/spunky, but, unfortunately, after two months of blockade, our fighters are beginning to feel tired.” Later he adds: “I was already sure that I would die a few times, but humor always helped me to endure it calmly. Death will come anyway, but when a warrior dies protecting his country, personally I consider it a worthy death.”

But frustration also comes through in Mr. Krotevych’s messages: “I often don’t understand the worth of the guarantees of security and territorial integrity given, among others, by U.S. President Bill Clinton in the Budapest Memorandum”—the 1994 agreement under which Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons in exchange for security assurances from the U.S., Britain and Russia. “Otto von Bismarck has said that any treaty with Russia is not worth the paper it is written on, and there are no doubts about that, but can the United States renege on its promises so easily?”

I ask him what he wants readers to understand. “Evil doesn’t understand agreements and negotiations,” he replies. “Evil only understands power. . . . And waiting only causes a lot of innocent human victims.”

Ms. Melchior is a Journal editorial page writer.

For Whom Do Democrats Seek Lower Drug Costs?

By Newt Gingrich

Americans frustrated with high out-of-pocket costs for drugs may be tempted to support what was until recently a proposal only pushed by the most left-wing Democrats—having politicians and bureaucrats dictate the price and availability of drugs for Medicare beneficiaries. But note who would benefit under the Democrats’ plans. It isn’t patients.

Much has been written in these pages about why using Medicare to dictate the price of drugs is a terrible idea. It’s essentially a form of price control that would dry up private-sector investment in research and development of new drugs—and ultimately put bureaucrats in charge of whether seniors have coverage for, or even access to, medications their doctors believe are best for them.

Despite these dangers to seniors and other patients, Democrats are doubling down, probably because they think it’s good politics. Polls show broad support for the idea of government “negotiating” the price of drugs. But that appeal is based on a lie.

They plan to divert savings to other programs, not help those on Medicare.

Americans are right to be angry about what they are paying for drugs. Out-of-pocket costs can vary wildly between pharmacies and change suddenly based on the behind-the-scenes negotiations between pharmacy-benefit managers and drugmakers. Additionally, seniors face the complexity of the Medicare drug coverage “donut hole,” in which their out-of-pocket costs can increase even further.

Given the public’s frustration, it’s no surprise Democrats market their plan as a way to reduce drug costs. But for whom?

The Democrats’ plans to have the government negotiate drug prices don’t dedicate all the reduced Medicare spending to lowering out-of-pocket costs for seniors. Democrats want to redirect that money to pay for unrelated spending priorities. In fact, drug-price negotiation was included as a pay-for in the Build Back Better bill to help make it seem as if the giant spending package wouldn’t add to the deficit.

All told, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the Democrats’ bill would have diverted \$266 billion in Medicare spending to pay for other programs if passed into law. Taking a quarter of a trillion dollars out of an already-stressed Medicare program would be a disaster for seniors. Thankfully, that reconciliation bill never made it through the Senate.

But in March Sen. Joe Manchin revived the Medicare price-negotiation plan, insisting that the money supposedly saved should be used on priorities other than Medicare. Again, notice what the so-called savings aren’t fully committed to: lowering what seniors pay for their medications.

Ultimately, under the Democrats’ plan, billions in so-called savings meant to benefit seniors would be redirected to fund unrelated spending priorities and create potential new access restrictions in the process. CBO predicts fewer new medical breakthroughs as R&D investments dry up as a result of government pricing schemes.

If liberals in Congress really wanted to reduce out-of-pocket drug costs, they would have supported the drug-rebate reforms championed by the Trump administration and many Republicans in Congress. This would have required negotiated savings between PBMs and drugmakers to pass directly to seniors by accounting for the rebate when determining the cost-sharing amount. Currently, patients often end up paying costs based on the sticker price of medications rather than the price that has been negotiated between the manufacturers and PBMs.

Requiring that savings go to seniors prevents Democrats from spending it elsewhere, showing again that the Democrats care about government expansion more than they care about the American people.

So the next time Democrats say they want to lower drug prices, ask yourself—for whose benefit?

Mr. Gingrich, a Republican, served as speaker of the House, 1995-99, and is chairman of Gingrich 360, a consulting and production firm that advises companies and organizations in the healthcare industry.

How Elon Musk Can Unlock Twitter’s Full Potential

By David Gelernter

The world is speculating about where Elon Musk will take Twitter. It’s an important question, because the social network has the potential to do vastly more than it does now. Today Twitter is like Hoover Dam, with all its raging power put to use lighting one 40-watt bulb. But with a few fairly small changes, Twitter would stand a decent chance of becoming the basic interface between users and all their digital information. As such, it would help the American software industry retain its standing as the world leader.

In 1994 Eric Freeman and I invented the Twitter-type stream, called a Lifestream. On your computer, a Lifestream looks like a single file of playing cards receding into the depth of the screen. The idea is to combine all your digital possessions—documents, photos, videos, bookmarks, etc.—with all your email and the whole of your digital future, insofar as you know it. The future holds approaching appointments and events, work to do later, commercial information and so on. Each of these items corresponds to one card.

As a Lifestream user, you decide whether to make your stream private (possibly including some public cards) or public (possibly with some private ones). You can specify which outside users are allowed to see

your stream—perhaps a group of friends or colleagues. If you make a stream public, allow only one short comment on each card, and disable the future, the result resembles a Twitter-type stream. But a Lifestream’s purpose is to be a digital diary: a chronological list of all your digital possessions and the events of your approaching future. It is also a communications medium. If you allow access to your stream

There’s so much more the social network could be doing to organize and enhance your digital life.

only to yourself and one friend, your friend can add cards to your stream. If you devote every card to communication, on the other hand, you are back to the Twitter-world.

You can “import” other people’s streams, but you can see only the cards to which you have been allowed access. If you import Kathy’s stream, her cards are intermixed with yours chronologically. Likewise if you import the Associated Press’s stream, the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s stream, or the stream for your college physics course.

We are still missing an important Twitter-stream accomplishment: your ability to “follow” someone or

something. Lifestream has it, but in a more powerful way than Twitter does. If you import Kathy’s stream, and then search for “owner Kathy”—thus making all your own cards disappear—you see all the cards on Kathy’s stream that are accessible to you. When new cards appear on Kathy’s stream and match your “owner Kathy” search, they appear on your search-stream too. The stream created by your search for “owner Kathy” continues to accumulate matching cards. So you are “following” Kathy.

Searching gives you another important power. If you search for “type photo,” the result is your own stream pared down to only photos. Everything else disappears. The result of your search, in other words, is a chronological photo library. Likewise if you search for “type email” or “type app”—you get back a chronological mail stream or app stream. If you search for “Disraeli,” on the other hand, you get back a stream of many types: each card that mentions “Disraeli,” whether it’s a document or email or anything else.

It follows that you don’t need a photo library, a video archive, a music library, a collection of “notes”—and a file system too. All

you need is a Lifestream.

The task and the opportunity are real. We depend on the Windows-based on-screen display, which dates back to Xerox Research in the 1970s, was refined and made into a commercial success by Apple in the 1980s, and was reproduced by Microsoft in 1990. Have we made no progress since the last century in the display of basic information?

Lifestreams are, obviously, not the only way forward. But one way or another, the industry must give consumers a reason to care—or computers will go the way of washing machines. They, too, have improved over the years. But in the U.S., no one has gotten excited about a washing machine since the 1950s.

If Silicon Valley doesn’t take the lead, some other country’s tech industry will step into the limelight and lead the march forward. It could be China. Most likely it will be Taiwan or Israel. But it could also be South Korea, Singapore or Japan. Right now, Mr. Musk has the ball. We’re all waiting to see what happens next, hoping it will be worthy of him—and of us.

Mr. Gelernter is a professor of computer science at Yale.

Notable & Quotable: Debt

Bret Baier interviewing Sen. Chris Murphy (D., Conn.) on “Fox News Sunday,” May 18:

BAIER: Last thing, student loan forgiveness. This is a big debate. And, you know, you talk about working families. You talk about folks who don’t go to college and you’re talking about wiping out student debt.

There is a former Education Department lawyer served under President Obama who wrote: If this issue is litigated, the more persuasive analysis tends to support the conclusion that the executive branch likely does not have the unilateral authority to engage in mass student debt cancellation.

Where are you? Does he have the authority and are you for this?

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

PUBLISHED SINCE 1889 BY DOW JONES & COMPANY

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WORLD NEWS

Reporter Killed in West Bank City Raid

Israelis, Palestinians provide conflicting accounts of shooting of Al Jazeera journalist

RAMALLAH, West Bank—A Palestinian-American reporter for the Al Jazeera news network was fatally shot Wednesday during an Israeli military raid in the

By **Dov Lieber,**
Adam Rasgon
and **Fatima AbdulKarim**

West Bank city of Jenin, prompting calls for an independent probe and jolting Israeli politics at a crucial moment for the fragile coalition government.

Israeli and Palestinian authorities provided conflicting accounts of the death of 51-year-old Shireen Abu Akleh, a journalist noted for her coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Her death comes amid heightened tensions after a spate of violent clashes in recent months between Israeli forces and Palestinians, many of which have taken place in Jenin.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said Ms. Abu Akleh died

from a shot to the head. The ministry added that a second journalist, Ali Al-Samudi, who works for the Jerusalem-based Al Quds newspaper, was shot and injured during the incident.

Al Jazeera, Palestinian officials and Palestinian journalists in the area during the incident blamed Israel for Ms. Abu Akleh's death. The Qatari-based news network said she was wearing a protective vest that identified her as a journalist when she was killed, and called her death "a blatant murder...in cold blood."

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz said preliminary findings from a continuing investigation conducted by the Israeli military indicate that no gunfire was directed at the journalist. "On the other hand, we have seen footage of indiscriminate shooting by Palestinian terrorists, which is likely to have hit the journalist," he said.

In a briefing Wednesday evening, Mr. Gantz was more measured in his comments, saying it was "too early" to come to any conclusions.

Israel's military said its forces came under fire by dozens of militants while raiding the crowded Jenin refugee camp



Palestinian-American reporter Shireen Abu Akleh was fatally shot Wednesday in the city of Jenin.

to arrest a Hamas operative. The Palestinian militant group recently has claimed one attack against Israelis and is calling for more from the West Bank.

Mr. Gantz's earlier statement came after Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said information collected by Israel indicated a "significant possibility" that Palestinian mili-

tants firing sporadically on Israeli forces were responsible for Ms. Abu Akleh's death.

Mr. Bennett pointed to a video that was tweeted Wednesday morning by Palestinian media, including by an unverified account for Al Jazeera in Palestine, and later distributed by the Israeli government, showing Palestinian militants claiming to

have shot a soldier during a firefight in Jenin. The Israeli premier said no Israeli soldier was injured, suggesting the militants might have hit Ms. Abu Akleh.

Palestinian eyewitnesses said the killing of Ms. Abu Akleh occurred too far away to be related to clashes between Israeli forces and Palestinian militants. A forensic analysis of the video by

left-wing Israeli human-rights group B'Tselem showed the incidents were separated by a maze of urban space and "could not possibly" be connected.

Mr. Bennett said Palestinian officials declined to carry out a joint investigation with Israel into Ms. Abu Akleh's death. A senior Palestinian Authority official, Hussein al-Sheikh, denied that Israel offered a joint investigation and said the Palestinian government would transfer information about the case to the International Criminal Court to conduct an independent probe.

U.S. Ambassador to Israel Thomas Nides said in a tweet that he encourages "a thorough investigation into the circumstances of her death and the injury of at least one other journalist today in Jenin."

The Jerusalem-born Ms. Abu Akleh covered the occupied Palestinian territories for Al Jazeera Arabic for 26 years, working through multiple wars, a Palestinian uprising known as the Second Intifada, as well as covering international affairs such as the U.S. elections. She also taught journalism at Birzeit University in the West Bank.

Ahead of Election, Australians Focus on Rising Prices

By **MIKE CHERNEY**

WOY WOY, Australia—About a 50-mile drive up the coast from Sydney, Woy Woy sits among a collection of suburban towns that could determine who wins Australia's nationwide election later this month.

Many here say a big issue on their minds when they vote on May 21 will be the cost of living. At a cafe, owners Ann-Maree and Andrew Hardwick fret that their food and drinks are becoming too expensive.

Rising costs for meat, milk and vegetables have forced the Hardwicks to increase their prices by 5% to 10%—though they are offering smaller portions to keep their meals affordable for customers, many of whom are retirees. A medium coffee at their cafe, Hardwick's on Blackwall, already costs 4.80 Australian dollars, or about \$3.35. Ms. Hardwick was alarmed by reports suggesting a cup could soon cost 7 Australian dollars.

"We've looked at each other and gone, 'I don't know who is going to pay that,'" said Ms. Hardwick. The cost of living is a big issue for her in the coming vote, she said, and she isn't sure whom she will support.

Rising costs—from food to housing to healthcare—have emerged as the dominant issue in a campaign that pits Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his center-right coalition against the center-left Labor Party, led by Anthony Albanese. Consumer prices in Aus-



Andrew and Ann-Maree Hardwick fret that the prices at their cafe are getting too expensive for their largely older clientele.

tralia in the first quarter were up 5.1% from a year earlier, the biggest rise in two decades.

Woy Woy, a waterfront town of more than 10,000 people, is in a battleground electorate called Robertson that Mr. Morrison's Liberal Party likely will need to hold to retain its slim parliamentary majority. Mr. Morrison earned a surprise victory in the last election three years ago by painting his rivals as out of touch with working- and middle-class voters, and to win again, he must convince enough of those voters that the economy is better off under him than it would be under Mr. Albanese.

The people of Robertson, which encompasses commuter suburbs, retirement developments and touristy beachside towns, are on average older, less educated and less wealthy

than Australians overall, making the electorate a key test for the prime minister.

"If Morrison can hold on there, it may be a good indication of where the government goes," said Mark Rolfe, an hon-

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is seeking reelection amid increasing inflation.

orary lecturer at the University of New South Wales who focuses on Australian politics.

The highest inflation in decades has become a flashpoint for incumbents in many countries. In the U.S., where annual

At the Pub, Voters Weigh Their Choices

At a historic pub in Woy Woy, Michael Isbester laments that he has been priced out of some cuts of meat, such as brisket. Mr. Isbester, a longtime Labor supporter who commutes to Sydney to work as a scaffolder, said he doesn't mind reducing spending on takeaway food to save money, but that cooking at home should be affordable.

"I'm picking and choosing what I'm buying each week a lot more than what I was 12

months ago," said the 29-year-old. "I've grown up here my whole life and now I can barely afford to rent here."

Other voters said they plan to support Prime Minister Scott Morrison again. Jillene Donnelly, a music teacher, said he deserves credit for keeping inflation below that of other developed countries. She said she and her husband are close to retiring and looked into whether rising interest rates would affect their plans, but don't think they will. "I think we've still got a bright future ahead for our country," she said. "I think the PM's been doing a good job."

consumer-price inflation recently eased a bit to 8.3%, polls show that many voters disapprove of President Biden's handling of the issue. In France, far-right leader Marine Le Pen tapped into rising frustration over inflation to challenge President Emmanuel Macron, who held on to win a second term.

The global inflation surge is driven by a combination of factors: Government stimulus meant to prop up economies during the pandemic, supply-chain issues, pent-up demand now that many pandemic-era rules have eased and Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The war has disrupted markets for wheat, corn and oil, adding to the pressure lifting food and gas prices.

Mr. Morrison has made his management of the economy a pillar of his campaign. During

the pandemic, the government effectively paid wages for many private-sector workers so they could stay in their jobs, and unemployment recently fell to 4%, a multiyear low. The government also has temporarily cut fuel taxes, offered one-time payments to some Australians, boosted income-tax relief and widened access to cheaper medications.

To tame inflation, Australia's central bank this month raised interest rates for the first time in more than a decade, increasing its cash rate to 0.35% from 0.1%. That will be felt by many homeowners: Mortgages in Australia typically have a variable rate.

Even with inflation, Mr. Morrison contends that the economy is doing well, noting that the central bank expects

unemployment to fall further and wage growth to pick up.

Mr. Albanese's Labor Party has said that despite low unemployment, wages haven't kept pace with inflation, and there is a shortage of skilled workers and significant underemployment. The party's economic plan calls for investing in cleaner and cheaper energy, better education and less expensive child care—aiming to ease cost-of-living pain and boost workforce participation.

Mark Coroneos, a 29-year-old hospitality worker in Woy Woy, said that in the previous election he voted for Mr. Morrison's party, swayed by its tough stance on China. This time, Mr. Coroneos, who has a 6-year-old son, said he is leaning toward Labor.

"Cost of living shot up a lot," he said, adding that he is setting aside no more than about \$75 a week for his savings—less than he used to—as housing, gas and utilities grow costlier. "It's getting pretty crazy."

Back at the Woy Woy cafe, Mr. Hardwick said his business wouldn't have survived the pandemic without government support, and that he is leaning toward voting for the Liberals again. But Ms. Hardwick, who voted for the Liberals last time, said she is having trouble deciding because the two sides have spent much of the campaign criticizing each other.

"We know what they think of each other," she said. "They need to tell us more about what they're going to do."

WORLD WATCH

EUROPEAN UNION

Mask Mandates For Air Travel Lifted

The European Union will no longer recommend medical masks be worn at airports and on planes starting next week amid the easing of coronavirus restrictions across the bloc, though member states can still require them, officials said Wednesday.

The European Union Aviation Safety Agency said it hoped the joint decision, made with the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control, would mark "a big step forward in the normalization of air travel" for passengers and crews.

The new guideline "takes account of the latest developments in the pandemic, in particular the levels of vaccination and naturally acquired immunity, and the accompanying lifting of restrictions in a growing number of European countries," the two agencies said in a joint statement.

While the new recommendations take effect May 16, rules for masks may still vary by airline beyond that date if they fly to or from destinations where the rules are different.

Germany's Health Ministry said it would continue to require all passengers over the age of 6 to wear medical masks on flights to, from or within the country, though they can be removed during meals.

—Associated Press



A damaged bust of D.A. Rajapaksa, father of former Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, is pictured at a museum, following violent clashes between pro- and antigovernment factions and police, in Weeraketiya, Sri Lanka, on Wednesday.

SRI LANKA

President Promises Changes Amid Crisis

Sri Lanka's president on Wednesday promised to appoint a new prime minister, empower the Parliament and abolish the all-powerful executive presidential system as reforms to stabilize the

country engulfed in a political crisis and violence triggered by the worst economic crises in memory.

In a televised address, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa said that he condemned attacks on peaceful protesters by mobs who came to support his brother and former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who resigned Monday.

"I am taking steps to appoint within this week a new prime minister who has the trust of a majority in Parliament, who can win over the confidence of the people and a new cabinet to control the current situation, to stop the country from falling into anarchy and to continue the government's functions that are at a standstill," Gotabaya Raja-

paksa said. "I will make way for the new prime minister to present a new program of work and implement it."

He said he would also give away much of his powers to Parliament and when some normally returns, take steps to abolish the country's powerful executive presidential system.

—Associated Press

IRAN

Tehran Detains Two Europeans

Shortly before the European Union envoy met Iran's nuclear negotiator in Tehran on Wednesday in a last-ditch attempt to salvage Iran's atomic deal with world powers, the country's Intelligence Ministry announced that authorities have detained two Europeans.

Photos surfaced of the EU coordinator of the nuclear talks, Enrique Mora, looking stern as he shook hands awkwardly with Iranian negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani, who beamed and waved.

The Intelligence Ministry gave scant details about the detained Europeans, saying only that they shared the same nationality, which wasn't identified, and sought to "take advantage" of the protests springing up in several Iranian provinces as laborers and teachers press for better wages.

The two Europeans are being held on vague charges of planning to cause "chaos, social disorder, and instability," authorities said.

The detentions came as Tehran vows to execute an imprisoned Swedish researcher later this month—a case that coincides with a landmark war-crimes trial of an Iranian official in Sweden.

And, in yet another escalation, Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard reportedly shelled Kurdish targets in northern Iraq.

—Associated Press

TECHNOLOGY: RIVIAN HOLDS TO PRODUCTION FORECAST B4

BUSINESS & FINANCE

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Thursday, May 12, 2022 | B1

S&P 3935.18 ▼ 1.65% S&P FIN ▼ 1.00% S&PIT ▼ 3.30% DJTRANS ▼ 1.18% WSJ\$IDX ▲ 0.02% 2-YR. TREAS. yield 2.629% NIKKEI (Midday) 25992.6 ▼ 0.84% See more at WSJ.com/Markets

TerraUSD Craters in Crypto Rout

A selloff in a cryptocurrency that was supposed to be pegged to \$1 accelerated Wednesday, briefly sending its price to less than a quarter of that value.

By Caitlin Ostrhoff, Elaine Yu and Paul Kiernan

TerraUSD traded as low as 23 cents Wednesday, according to data from CoinDesk. As of about 5 p.m. ET, it had rebounded partially to about 67 cents in volatile trading.

A stablecoin, this breed of cryptocurrencies had gained favor among traders for being the one part of the crypto universe that was known for its stability. While the most popular stablecoins maintain their levels with assets that include dollar-denominated debt and cash, TerraUSD is what is known as an algorithmic stablecoin, which relies on financial engineering to maintain its link to the dollar.

The break in TerraUSD's peg began over the weekend with a series of large withdrawals of TerraUSD from Anchor Protocol, a sort of decentralized bank for crypto investors.

Anchor Protocol is built on the technology of the same Terra blockchain network that TerraUSD is based on. It had been a major factor in the growth of the stablecoin in recent months by allowing crypto investors to earn returns of nearly 20% annually by lending out their TerraUSD holdings.

At the same time, TerraUSD was also sold for other stablecoins backed by traditional assets through various liquidity pools that contribute to the stability of the peg, as well as through cryptocurrency exchanges. The sudden outflow of money spooked some traders who began selling TerraUSD and its sister token Luna. Before its peg was broken, TerraUSD was the third-largest stablecoin, with a total market value of \$18 billion.

TerraUSD's fall to 23 cents at around 3:30 a.m. ET marked a 70% drop from its value 24 hours earlier, according to CoinDesk.

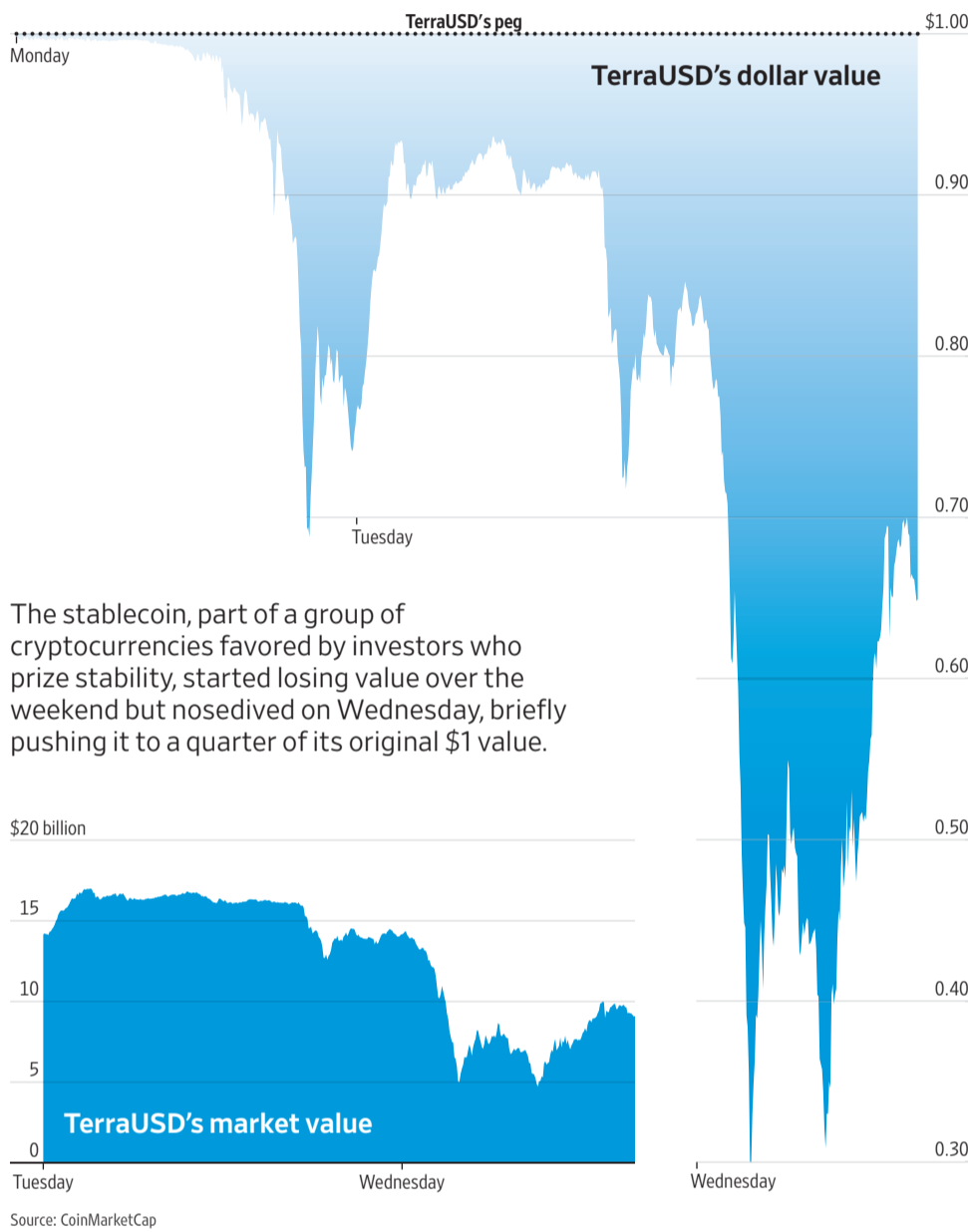
Even as TerraUSD began regaining some value after hitting its low, Luna continued to fall. The token was down about 95% from the previous 24 hours at around 5 p.m. ET, trading at \$1.16.

"I understand the last 72 hours have been extremely tough on all of you—know that I am resolved to work with every one of you to weather this crisis, and we will build our way out of this," wrote Do Kwon, the South Korean developer who created TerraUSD, on Twitter on Wednesday.

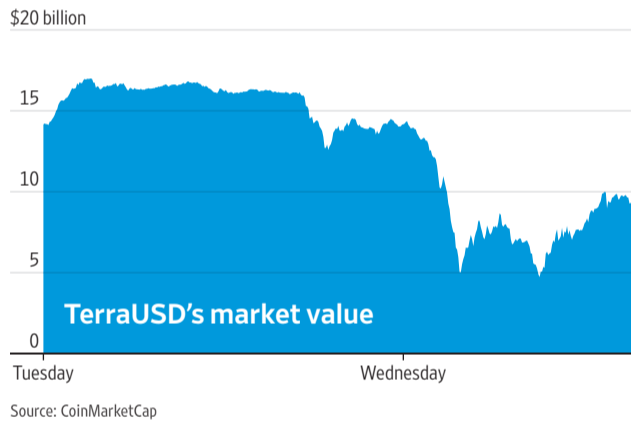
Stablecoins have surged in popularity the past two years and now act as the grease that moves the gears of the cryptocurrency ecosystem. Traders prefer to buy coins such as bitcoin, ether and dogecoin us-

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◆ Coinbase discloses risk to users B10



The stablecoin, part of a group of cryptocurrencies favored by investors who prize stability, started losing value over the weekend but nosedived on Wednesday, briefly pushing it to a quarter of its original \$1 value.



Source: CoinMarketCap

Instacart Readies Public Listing

By JAEWON KANG

Instacart Inc. said it filed confidentially to go public, a long-awaited move that comes after the company recently cut its valuation by 40%.

The San Francisco-based grocery delivery company said Wednesday that it submitted a draft registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The company had no additional comment.

The filing comes as Instacart's growth slows following a pandemic-fueled boom, when people turned to the company's app to order groceries online rather than going to physical stores. The company raised more than \$265 million in March 2021 from investors

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SEC Eyes Musk's Twitter File Lag

By DAVE MICHAELS

WASHINGTON—Federal regulators are investigating Elon Musk's late disclosure last month of his sizable stake in Twitter Inc., according to people familiar with the matter, a lag that allowed him to buy more stock without alerting other shareholders to his ownership.

The Securities and Exchange Commission is probing Mr. Musk's tardy submission of a public form that investors must file when they buy more than 5% of a company's shares, the people said. The disclosure

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Market Turmoil Spreads to Junk Bonds

By MATT WIRZ

Shock waves from the stock market's declines are spreading into junk bonds, sending prices tumbling and forcing some companies to cancel new deals.

Average prices of U.S. high-yield bonds fell to around 91 cents on the dollar Monday, the lowest level since May 2020 when pandemic shutdowns slammed the global economy, according to the most recent data from Bloomberg.

The selloff has punished

companies with below-investment-grade credit ratings and poor reported earnings. It is also making it harder and more expensive for some to raise new debt for capital investments, acquisitions and refinancings.

Bonds of Diebold Nixdorf Inc., which makes automated-teller machines, dropped 45% on Tuesday to about 40 cents on the dollar after the company reduced its 2022 financial forecasts, in part because of lost sales in Russia and Ukraine.

A Party City Holdco Inc.

8.75% bond due 2026 has been one of the most actively traded junk bonds this week, falling 15% to about 74 cents on the dollar, according to MarketAxess. The drop followed the retail chain's disclosure that gross profit margins fell 3.8 percentage points to 31.9% of net sales in the first quarter.

Frontier Communications Parent Inc. paid investors a yield of around 8.75% to issue \$800 million of new bonds on Monday for the expansion of its fiber-optic network. The unexpectedly high interest rate

attracted strong demand but sent the company's existing 6% bonds due 2030 tumbling about 8% to 80 cents on the dollar, according to MarketAxess.

"It's never a good sign when the new-issue market isn't functioning well," said Eric Hess, a high-yield portfolio manager at Newfleet Asset Management. "The last couple of days, the equity selloff has got people a little spooked."

Buffeted by a broad bond-market rout, high-yield bonds have lost about 10% this year, according to data from

Bloomberg. Their yields, which rise when prices fall, are now around 7.5% compared with 4.3% at the start of January. Until recently, junk bonds had been relatively insulated from the sharp moves of stock indexes such as the S&P 500—which has lost over 16% so far this year—but the two markets are starting to trade more in tandem, investors say.

The extra yield investors demand to hold junk bonds over U.S. Treasury bonds has jumped to 4.4 percentage points from 2.8 in January.

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Duke Realty Rebuffs Prologis Buyout Offer

By CHRIS WACK

Duke Realty Corp. on Wednesday rejected a nearly \$24 billion buyout offer from the warehousing giant Prologis Inc., calling the unsolicited offer insufficient.

"We believe the latest offer, virtually unchanged from its prior proposals, is insufficient in that regard," Duke Realty said in a statement, adding it would have no further comment on the proposal at this time.

Prologis on Tuesday made its all-stock offer for Duke Realty public following more than five months of private overtures. The deal would have added to Prologis's vast footprint of warehouses and distribution centers that help facilitate e-commerce orders.

Prologis controls more than 1 billion square feet of industrial real estate that is used by companies such as Amazon.com Inc., Home De-

pot Inc. and FedEx Corp. to store merchandise and fulfill online orders.

The offer for Duke Realty, which owns about 160 million square feet of industrial real estate in 19 major U.S. logistics markets, was seen as a vote of confidence in the e-commerce sector at a time when some investors are getting nervous about its growth.

Prologis offered to buy Duke Realty for \$61.68 a share, or about \$23.7 billion. Under terms of that offer, Duke Realty shareholders would receive 0.466 share of Prologis common stock for each share of Duke Realty common stock they own.

Duke Realty shares rose 7.8% to \$53.46 on Wednesday, well below the offer, suggesting investors are skeptical the deal will go through.

Prologis shares fell 1.3% to \$123.74.

Industrial real estate has

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A company crashes after a cancer-drug failure, in the sector's latest setback. B2



GETTY IMAGES

AUTOMOBILES

Toyota expects the rising cost of raw materials to eat into its profit. B3

After 2 Days, Moderna CFO Exits Amid Probe at Ex-Firm

By PETER LOFTUS

On Monday, Jorge Gomez took the reins as the finance chief of the biotech success story Moderna Inc., leaving behind the less flashy world of dental products at his previous employer, Dentsply Sirona Inc.

A day later, Mr. Gomez was out.

Moderna, maker of a leading Covid-19 vaccine, said Wednesday that its newly hired chief financial officer left the company on Tuesday, citing a newly revealed internal investigation by Dentsply into matters that include financial reporting.

David Meline, who had just retired as Moderna's finance chief after a two-year stint, will retake the post while the company reopens its search for a successor, the company said.

Mr. Gomez didn't respond to a request for comment. Moderna said Mr. Gomez departed following Dentsply's public dis-



MADDIE MALHOTRA FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Moderna's recently retired ex-CFO will retake the post for now.

closure of the investigation.

The abrupt personnel move is the latest in a series of executive changes at Moderna since 2020, as it has undergone a transformation from small biotech startup to a Covid-19 vaccine leader with aspirations to be a global player in vaccines and drugs.

Since the pandemic started, several top executives have left Moderna, including a previous CFO, a chief medical officer and a general counsel. Late last year, Moderna ousted its chief commercial officer who had been on the job for less than a year.

The company has cited vari-

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Elon Musk likely saved over \$143 million by tardy reporting.

Musk's Late Filing Is Probed

Continued from page B1

functions as an early sign to shareholders and companies that a significant investor could seek to control or influence a company.

The Tesla Inc. chief executive made his filing on April 4, at least 10 days after his stake surpassed the trigger point for disclosure. Mr. Musk hasn't publicly explained why he didn't file in a timely manner.

The SEC investigation hasn't been previously reported. An SEC spokesman declined to comment. An attorney for Mr. Musk didn't respond to a message seeking comment.

Mr. Musk likely saved more than \$143 million by not reporting that his trades had crossed the 5% threshold, said Daniel Taylor, a University of Pennsylvania accounting professor, since the share price could have been higher had the market known of the billionaire's growing stake.

Investors who cross that line are required to file a form with the SEC disclosing their stake within 10 days. Mr. Musk's holdings topped 5% on March 14, securities filings show, meaning he should have disclosed his stake by March

24 under SEC rules. After March 24, Mr. Musk purchased \$513 million worth of stock at prices between \$38.20 and \$40.31 a share, according to a regulatory filing. The buying spree made him Twitter's largest individual shareholder, with 9.2% of its shares.

Based on Twitter's closing price of \$49.97 on April 4, the day Mr. Musk disclosed his stake, he likely saved more than \$143 million on those trades, Dr. Taylor estimated.

"The case is easy. It's straightforward. But whether they're going to pick that battle with Elon is another question," said Dr. Taylor, referring to the prospect of a regulatory lawsuit against the entrepreneur.

The SEC could drop its investigation without bringing civil claims, as not every probe results in formal action. An SEC lawsuit against Mr. Musk would be unlikely to derail the Twitter deal because the company's board has endorsed it and the SEC generally lacks the power to stop mergers or take-private transactions, said Jill E. Fisch, a securities and corporate-law professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Regulators could seek a court order preventing Mr. Musk from voting shares he acquired without proper disclosure, but the SEC generally hasn't pursued that remedy, Ms. Fisch said.

—Rebecca Elliott contributed to this article.

Instacart Readies Listing

Continued from page B1

at a \$39 billion valuation. It became the biggest grocery delivery company, counting supermarket chains Kroger Co. and Walmart Inc. as customers. Instacart also began delivering from nonfood retailers like Best Buy Co. and expanded its advertising business to boost sales and offset costs associated with delivery.

In 2021, Instacart named Fidi Simo, a longtime executive

at Facebook parent Meta Platforms Inc., as chief executive. Apoorva Mehta, co-founder and former CEO of Instacart, became executive chairman, saying at the time that Ms. Simo would help take the company public and expand its business.

Mr. Mehta and Ms. Simo last year also discussed possible deals with competitors DoorDash Inc. and Uber Technologies Inc., people familiar with the matter previously said.

Instacart's business has grown turbulent, as competition increases and consumer habits shift. Instacart's sales grew by 330% from 2019 to 2020, according to 1010data Services LLC, but increased 15% in 2021.

BUSINESS & FINANCE



The store chain, which is exploring a sale, has been pressured by activist investor Macellum Advisors to replace up to 10 directors.

Kohl's Board Shake-Up Rejected

By SUZANNE KAPNER

Kohl's Corp. shareholders rejected an activist investor's push to replace up to 10 directors, endorsing the existing board as the retailer is exploring a potential sale.

The company said Wednesday that its slate of 13 directors were all re-elected, according to a preliminary tally of votes at its annual shareholder meeting.

Kohl's has been under pressure from activist investor Macellum Advisors GP LLC, which has urged it to make changes that include selling and leasing back real estate as well as selling the entire company. Macellum, which owns a 5%

stake in Kohl's, said the vote was close and showed there was support for a sale of the company, not for the board's operating plan. "We contend this vote was a shareholder referendum for a sale," said Jonathan Duskin, the firm's managing partner.

Kohl's Chairman Peter Boneparth said, "The board remains focused on running a robust and intentional review of strategic alternatives while executing our strategy to drive shareholder value."

Kohl's is in the process of evaluating offers from bidders. Private-equity firm Sycamore Partners and Canada's Hudson's Bay Co. are among those considering deals for

the retailer, The Wall Street Journal has reported.

The big proxy advisory firms whose recommendations can hold a lot of sway were divided. Institutional Shareholder Services Inc. backed the activists, while Glass Lewis recommended that shareholders vote for all 13 of the retailer's nominees, including its chief executive, Michelle Gass.

Kohl's had been struggling before the pandemic. Its operating margin fell to 6.1% in 2019 from 11.5% in 2011, while its sales were little changed. Then the coronavirus pandemic hit, taking a big toll on sales and wiping out profits in 2020.

Sales and profits rebounded in 2021. But by January 2022,

the retailer's stock was worth less than it was two decades ago. The shares fell 5% to \$46.65 Wednesday, giving the company a market capitalization of roughly \$6 billion.

Kohl's is to report its first-quarter results on May 19.

Since taking the helm of Kohl's in May 2018, Ms. Gass has forged partnerships with Amazon.com Inc. and Sephora, brought in new brands and beefed up its loyalty program.

Macellum contends those moves haven't added enough value.

—Cara Lombardo contributed to this article.

◆ Heard on the Street: Daunting tasks remain..... B12

Biotech's Crash Follows Cancer-Drug Failure

By JOSEPH WALKER

Nektar Therapeutics was one of biotech's highfliers, enjoying a generous, multibillion-dollar partnership with cancer powerhouse Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. Then Nektar's promise cratered.

After a series of disappointing study results, Bristol and Nektar terminated their partnership, Nektar's market value is down 96% from its peak in 2018 and the biotech was forced last month to slash \$120 million in spending and 70% of its workforce. The company is also shedding office and lab space.

"It will take some time to build the company back," Nektar Chief Executive Howard Robin said. "It is a tough industry, and you're not going to get a success on everything you work on."

The company's ups and downs are an example of how investor enthusiasm for biotechnology has soured in recent months, spurred in part by a series of setbacks such as Nektar's cancer-drug failure.

The biotech boom of recent years, when venture-capital investment, initial public offerings and stock-market valuations reached new highs, has turned into a bear market.

Amid rising interest rates and consumer-price inflation, investors have been moving their money out of risky stocks such as biotech companies. The SPDR S&P Biotech ETF, an equal-weighted index of biotech stocks, is down 40% so far this year, compared with a 16% decline in the S&P 500.

"It's the slump of all slumps, no [investors] want to buy anything, and there's a ton of selling pressure," said Brian Skorney, an R.W. Baird analyst.

For biotechs that hit study setbacks or are still years away from bringing drugs on the market, the squeeze has meant dwindling cash reserves and then, painful cost cuts.

Bluebird Bio Inc., which is developing gene-replacement therapies for rare diseases, said in April that it would slash its spending by as much as 40% and cut its workforce by 30% so that it could survive into the first half of next year.

Several years ago, multiple pharmaceutical companies were clamoring to forge partnerships with Nektar on its anticancer drug bempegaldesleukin, a modified version of a natural protein that helps stimulate the growth of immune cells that can attack tumors.

Researchers thought that the drug, known as bempeg, could help boost the effectiveness of another type of cancer treatment known as checkpoint inhibitors that unleash immune cells to fight cancer.

In February 2018, Bristol Myers agreed to pay \$1.85 billion, with a combination of cash and Nektar share purchases, to develop bempeg with Bristol's checkpoint inhibitor Opdivo.

The deal was unusually favorable to Nektar, allowing the biotech to keep 65% of the drug's profits.

An early study produced such encouraging results that Bristol and Nektar decided to skip doing the kind of midstage, or Phase 2, study normally pursued to gain more confidence a drug works.

Instead, the partners started a large Phase 3 trial,

the last phase of testing needed for regulatory approval, testing a combination of bempeg and Bristol's blockbuster immunotherapy Opdivo to treat melanoma.

Nektar was shocked when the Phase 3 study failed in March, Mr. Robin said. The study found that combining bempeg and Opdivo was no better than Opdivo alone in treating metastatic melanoma.

In April, the companies said the combination had also failed in studies of kidney and bladder cancers.

Bristol declined to comment.

Nektar's market value fell from about \$2 billion to \$775 million, after the melanoma study's failure. Through Wednesday's close, Nektar's value was \$721 million, down from its high of \$17.5 billion in March 2018.

DigitalBridge, IFM Bids for Data-Center Firm Switch

By CHRIS WACK

DigitalBridge Group Inc. is buying Switch Inc., a data-center company, for \$11 billion, the latest digital asset being snapped up by the investment company.

DigitalBridge is partnering with an affiliate of the infrastructure investor IFM Investors to acquire Switch for \$34.25 a share. The deal includes the assumption of debt and is expected to close in the second half of this year.

DigitalBridge, led by Chief Executive Marc Ganzi, has been focused on buying various digital assets such as data centers, cell towers and fiber networks. Recent acquisitions have included fiber-network operator Zayo Group LLC; Vertical Bridge Holdings LLC, the largest private cell-tower operator in the U.S.; and AtlasEdge Data Centres, a European data-center business it created through a joint venture with Liberty Global PLC.



DigitalBridge CEO Marc Ganzi

Switch founder and CEO Rob Roy said the acquisition will help the company meet strong demand for its environmentally sustainable data-center infrastructure. Switch has plans to build more than 11 million additional square feet of capacity through 2030.

Switch shares, which have risen by two-thirds over the last 12 months, rose 9% Wednesday to \$33.54.

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BUSINESS NEWS

Philip Morris Deal Bolsters Its Portfolio

By JENNIFER MALONEY

Philip Morris International Inc. plans to re-enter the U.S. market through a \$16 billion acquisition of **Swedish Match AB** and challenge its partner, **Altria Group Inc.**, in the race to dominate smoke-free tobacco products.

Smokeless-tobacco maker Swedish Match said Wednesday that its board agreed to a 161.2 billion Swedish krona cash offer, equivalent to \$16 billion, from Philip Morris.

"If you aspire to be a truly global leader, you cannot ignore the largest markets," Philip Morris Chief Executive Jacek Olczak said in an interview. In the U.S., "there is room for a number of products from a number of players."

Philip Morris in 2008 was spun off from Altria in a move that gave investors direct access to the faster-growing foreign cigarette markets. Philip Morris now sells Marlboro and other cigarette brands outside the U.S., and is one of the world's

biggest tobacco companies. Altria sells Marlboros in the U.S.

As smokers look for less harmful alternatives to cigarettes, both companies have sought new revenue sources by investing billions of dollars in next-generation products. Altria in 2018 paid \$12.8 billion for a 35% stake in e-cigarette startup Juul Labs Inc. Philip Morris, which has been more aggressive in making the pivot to alternative products, aims to generate more than 50% of net revenue from smoke-free products by 2025. Last year, its smoke-free portfolio, led by the company's IQOS devices that heat rather than burn tobacco, accounted for about 29% of net revenue, or \$31.4 billion.

In the U.S.—Swedish Match's largest market, followed by Scandinavia—the smokeless tobacco company's Zyn nicotine-pouch brand dominates a category that includes rival offerings from Altria and **British American Tobacco PLC**.

Philip Morris plans to use Swedish Match's U.S. sales force

and manufacturing operations to market other smoke-free products including e-cigarettes and possibly IQOS devices, Mr. Olczak said Wednesday. Altria currently has the exclusive rights to sell IQOS in the U.S. Philip Morris has been unhappy with Altria's slow rollout of the product and the two are at odds about whether Altria has met the milestones to renew its licensing and distribution contract beyond April 2024.

"We have to reconcile these views," Mr. Olczak said.

Imports of IQOS to the U.S. were halted last year because of a patent dispute with BAT but sales of the product could resume next year, when Philip Morris plans to begin manufacturing IQOS in the U.S.

Without IQOS, Altria's reduced-risk-product portfolio would be limited to its On nicotine pouches and its minority stake in Juul. The Federal Trade Commission is seeking to unwind Altria's Juul investment; the commissioners are expected to vote on the matter



Smokeless-tobacco maker Swedish Match agreed to be sold. One of its stores in Stockholm.

this year. Altria, which failed in the past to develop next-generation products that appealed to smokers, says it is developing several new oral and heated-tobacco products.

Altria shares closed Wednesday down 8% since Monday, when The Wall Street Journal reported that Philip Morris and Swedish Match were in talks.

Altria didn't respond to a request for comment Wednesday. At an analyst conference in February, Altria Chief Exec-

utive Billy Gifford said his company had improved its product-development capabilities. "We expect to vigorously compete in the major smoke-free categories," Mr. Gifford said at the time.

Under the Swedish Match proposal, subject to shareholder approval, investors in the Stockholm-based company will receive 106 Swedish krona, equivalent to \$10.55, in cash for each share held. The price represents a 39% premium to the company's share price of

76.50 Swedish krona on Friday.

Swedish Match posted double-digit sales growth last year, led by its smoke-free division in the U.S., where Zyn is its fastest-growing product. Nicotine pouches are small packets containing nicotine and flavorings, without any tobacco, that are placed between the lip and gum.

—Jan Walker
contributed to this article.

◆ Heard on the Street: Philip Morris pays a premium..... B12

Toyota Sees Higher Material Costs Eating Into Profit

By SEAN MCLAIN

TOKYO—Toyota Motor Corp. said the auto industry faces a tough year because rising raw-material costs and a shortage in semiconductors continue to hamper production.

The company said it expected rising prices for raw materials would lower operating profit by the equivalent of \$11 billion in the current fiscal year ending March 2023—a record hit. It projected that net profit would fall 21% in the year to the equivalent of about \$17 billion, causing the share price to fall 4.4% in Tokyo trading Wednesday.

Car makers from giants such as Toyota to startups like Riv-

ian Automotive Inc. are struggling with rapidly rising prices for lithium, cobalt, nickel and other metals needed to produce modern vehicles. At the same time, chip makers are warning that the shortage of semiconductors is likely to stretch out for several more years.

In the U.S., average new-car prices are hovering around \$45,000, which has helped pad earnings at car companies despite production problems. In the recently ended fiscal year, Toyota reported a record operating profit equivalent to \$23 billion, despite a January-March quarter marred by production shutdowns. Operating profit in that quarter fell 32% compared with a year earlier to

the equivalent of \$3.57 billion, although revenue was up 5.5%.

Both General Motors Co. and Ford Motor Co. have warned that rising material prices and logistics costs are beginning to weigh on profit-

21%

The projected decline in profit at Toyota for the current year

ability, despite the historically high prices in the U.S. However, both maintained their profit outlooks for 2022.

"This fiscal year, it's going to be even more difficult than in other years to make a forecast," said Jun Nagata, Toyota's chief communication officer.

Mr. Nagata said an end to the Covid-19 pandemic was a potential bright spot, but negative factors prevailed otherwise. "Raw material prices are soaring, inflation is having an impact on the daily lives of people, [and] supply constraints of semiconductors will have an impact on the business of auto manufacturers," he said. Mr. Nagata singled out Europe as a particular concern, given Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Toyota said an expected rebound in sales volume would

help soften the blow from rising costs. It expects revenue in the current fiscal year to increase 5.2% to the equivalent of \$253 billion. It said it was exploring where it might be able to increase prices.

Toyota has said its strength in smaller, more affordable models like the Corolla offers it an advantage in periods when consumers might be looking to save on car purchases.

Toyota said it aimed to produce 9.7 million vehicles this year, a sharp rebound from the pandemic lows of the past two years. Toyota said it was being cautious with its forecast, given that it had been overly optimistic in the past year.

As of January 2022, the

company was targeting production of 11 million units in the year ending March 2023, but it walked back that target after repeated production problems.

A year ago, Toyota said it believed it had insulated itself from the worst of the semiconductor shortages, having stockpiled four months of chips. But as the shortage grew worse, even Toyota was hit by a series of production cuts. It said Tuesday that some production lines in Japan would close for up to six days this month because of the Covid-19-related lockdown in Shanghai.

—Kosaku Narioka
contributed to this article.

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Rivian Sticks to Its Production Forecast

By SEAN MCLAIN

Electric-vehicle startup Rivian Automotive Inc. maintained its production forecast for 2022, with executives saying the supply-chain problems that have stifled its factory output are expected to ease later this year.

Rivian, which reported quarterly results after the market close Wednesday, said revenue for the first quarter was \$95 million, below Wall Street expectations.

The company's net loss nearly quadrupled to \$1.6 billion for the January-to-March period, compared with \$414 million in the prior-year quarter, as the company continued

to spend heavily on R&D and manufacturing of its first vehicles. Rivian said higher logistics costs also weighed on results, due in part to higher spending on expedited shipping as a workaround to supply-chain disruptions.

Since the end of March, the company has stopped assembly lines for longer-than-anticipated periods, leading it to lose about a quarter of its planned production to supply constraints, Rivian said.

Chief Executive RJ Scaringe said Rivian has been working with suppliers to ensure more parts and believes the company is moving past earlier obstacles it had with getting semiconductor. He said Rivian plans to

add a second factory shift in the latter half of this year.

"We've seen really the worst of it, or sort of the valley if you will, of the supply constraints," Mr. Scaringe said, referring to the chip shortage.

Rivian executives said the company's losses should narrow as it begins to make full use of its factory in Normal, Ill., which can produce 150,000 vehicles a year. The company manufactured 2,553 vehicles and delivered 1,227 of them to customers during the quarter.

The quarterly report follows a multiweek slide in Rivian's stock price, which hit an all-time low this week and is trading at nearly a quarter of its initial offering price of \$78.

Following the results, Rivian shares rose 7.3% in after-hours trading. Before that, the stock fell 9.6% during the regular session, closing at \$20.60 a share.

The Irvine, Calif.-based auto manufacturer was among a handful of EV-focused startups that went public last year with highflying valuations, tapping Wall Street's zeal for the auto industry's transition to electric. But this year has proved challenging for the young company, which has struggled to increase production of its first two models, the R1T pickup and R1S sport-utility vehicle. Both went on sale last fall.

Like other auto makers, Rivian is confronting rising raw material costs, particularly on

ingredients needed to manufacture batteries, and troubles securing enough semiconductors and other parts to fully run the assembly line.

Rivian in March cut its 2022 production forecast to 25,000 vehicles, citing supply-chain and logistical difficulties. The company said it otherwise would have produced 50,000 trucks and SUVs.

Rivian had an adjusted loss of \$1.43 a share for the quarter, compared with analysts' expectations of a loss of \$1.37.

The obstacles facing the broader global auto industry are falling hard on startups like Rivian, which have yet to build the type of clout with suppliers that some of their well-established

competitors have amassed over decades, executives and analysts say. The car company this spring increased prices on vehicle orders placed after March 1, reflecting higher commodities costs.

Rivian's shares have been in sharp decline since its IPO in November, a listing that at the time was among the largest U.S. debuts since 2014. At one point shortly afterward, Rivian's valuation climbed to more than \$160 billion, surpassing the market cap of both General Motors Co. and Ford Motor Co.

The stock sank to an all-time low Monday, after reports that Ford—an early investor in Rivian—sold about 8% of its stockholdings.

NASA Looks to Suppliers To Cut Costs for Rockets

By MICAH MAIDENBERG

NASA's costly rocket program could be the last time the agency mounts such an effort, according to some former NASA officials and space industry executives, as private space companies attempt to build cheaper vehicles more quickly.

Next month, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration plans another round of tests for a rocket built under its Space Launch System program, as the agency's moon-rocket effort is called, and other hardware. NASA intends to use SLS rockets as part of missions to return astronauts to the lunar surface, and later this year, plans an uncrewed test flight of an SLS rocket and Orion spacecraft it will blast to orbit.

Some former NASA and in-

dustry officials say such rocket projects may be increasingly unworkable, following delays with the SLS effort and rising costs. Companies such as Elon Musk's Space Exploration Technologies Corp., meanwhile, are developing their own rockets—potentially making NASA even more of a client of private-sector operators in the future.

"The launch industry is at a point where the technology is so mature that it may not be necessary to have the U.S. government invest in it," said Dan Goldin, a former NASA administrator. "It may be we're at a tipping point with this rocket."

Leaders at NASA have defended the program, saying there aren't at present alternatives as powerful as SLS vehicles, and have pledged to reduce costs. The SLS rockets cost the agency an estimated \$22.3 billion as of last summer, with billions more expected to be spent on the first few flights.

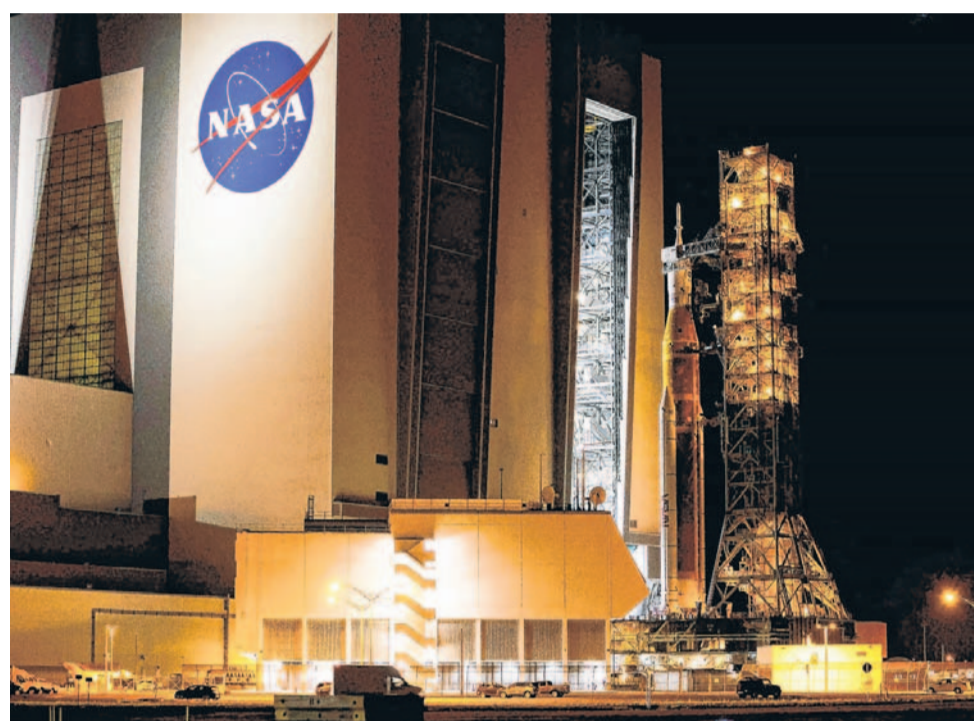
The huge vehicles are meant to launch Orion spacecraft, which are designed to carry astronauts on future

missions. Those ships, developed by Lockheed Martin Corp., have cost the agency billions in additional funding. NASA wants to use an SLS rocket and Orion ship as part a flight that would return astronauts to the moon in 2025.

The space agency followed its longtime playbook for the SLS rockets, hiring private companies such as Boeing Co. and Northrop Grumman Corp. to develop the vehicles. For decades, NASA tapped aerospace contractors to build rockets like the Saturn V vehicle, which blasted spacecraft carrying astronauts to the moon. The agency owned and operated those rockets.

A dozen years ago, Congress directed NASA to acquire a powerful rocket system, saying the vehicles would allow the agency to conduct deeper-space missions.

As of August 2021, Boeing held NASA contracts valued at \$11.1 billion related to its work on different stages of SLS rockets, according to NASA's inspector general. Northrop



Delays and rising costs for the SLS rocket could prompt NASA to become more reliant on private-sector operators, such as SpaceX, in the future, some former agency and industry officials say.

Grumman had a contract with NASA valued at \$4.3 billion at the time to provide booster hardware for the vehicles.

Paul Martin, the NASA inspector general, in March described the expected costs, including ground operations, for the first four launches of SLS rockets and Orion spacecraft

as unsustainable.

A Boeing spokeswoman said NASA development costs, after adjusting for inflation, for SLS have been a quarter of those for Saturn V. Costs will continue to become more affordable as teams move from vehicle development to operations, she said.

Northrop Grumman has incorporated lessons learned from its role in the rocket's first planned orbital launch into preparations for the second flight, reducing hardware costs and its development timeline, Wendy Williams, vice president for propulsion systems at the company, said.

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Kellyn Smith Kenny

Chief Marketing & Growth Officer, AT&T

When faced with a new challenge, what's your decision-making process and where do you turn to for trusted information or advice?

When faced with a business challenge, the first action the team and I take is not an action at all, but a pause — a moment for clarity. We work and live at such an instantaneous pace it's easy to accept the quickest solution as the best one. But if we're only solving for quickness, we could overlook the opportunity for a smarter, more upstream solution.

So, step one, pause. Step two, identify the root cause (not the symptom). Step three, align on a clear frame of reference for what success looks like. Step four, mine for data. From this position, we can work backward from a place of success rather than settling, and information rather than blind instinct.

For me, the decision-making process is a process of intense listening and data collection, a practice of equal parts head and heart.

The quantitative data helps us narrow in, while qualitative data and diverse perspectives allow us to look out. In my experience, the best method for obtaining such varied sets of data isn't a large cross-functional meeting where often the loudest or most senior voice wins, but in smaller sessions. A mix of sessions with those closest to the issue who know the product, service and customer best — these

experts ground the team in the most imperative details — as well as sessions with those outside of the issue whose fresh eyes and ears might see a clear or creative solution other teams may not. Additionally, we seek resources from third parties, mine learnings and best practices from adjacent industries and experiment with small pilots or trials, which allows us to be informed in real time and adjust along the way.

With more resources and data available than ever before, it's truly an incredible time to be a marketer. At the dawn of a new age of connectivity, it's especially exciting to be a marketer at AT&T.

What's in your toolbox for investing in your team — to help them stay focused, feel supported and be productive?

I believe the effect that productivity and morale have on one another can be a virtuous cycle or a loop of doom. To create a positive, productive cycle, people need to feel a direct connection between the work they do and the impact it has on the business. We strive to create that connection with transparent and consistent communication of our shared company objectives and goals, in addition to constant analysis of our own processes and feedback loops.

This month, in fact, we'll be trialing Wabi-sabi retrospectives — a practice

inspired by the traditional Japanese aesthetic in which you celebrate, accept and, in the case of marketing, learn from imperfections. While we celebrate our many successes, we refuse to ignore imperfections — the areas where we might have gone wrong, can improve or may have missed altogether. Those are the most tangible and actionable opportunities for growth and they are sitting right in front of us. Identifying and solving imperfections is the difference between good and great, a shortcut to next-level breakthroughs.

What new technology are you most excited about?

A technology I'm particularly excited about is AT&T's combined power of 5G and fiber. Our strong fiber build will fuel our wireless 5G network, and these two next-gen technologies will serve as the digital backbone for this country's economy for years to come. Over time, with 5G and fiber, we will see speeds that begin to blur the difference between our physical and digital worlds. We're equipped for tomorrow's future-ready use cases. Whether it's faster speeds or lower latency with features like edge computing, network slicing, better security, private networks or massive IoT — all of these are going to enable applications of the future, and we'll be ready with the network you need. Our unique hybrid approach will further differentiate AT&T and position us to capture growth in this new era of connectivity.

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BUSINESS NEWS



The airline plans to offer faster internet connections, in-seat power ports and bigger overhead storage bins.

Southwest Adds Upgrades to Lure More Business Travelers

By ALISON SIDER

Southwest Airlines Co. plans to offer faster Wi-Fi, bigger overhead bins and in-seat power ports for the first time, as airlines compete to attract customers returning to travel.

Airline executives said they hope the \$2 billion of upgrades would be particularly attractive to business travelers, as Southwest makes a play to gain a bigger share of the corporate travel market.

Southwest, which allows travelers up to two checked bags at no cost, had stuck with the standard overhead bins for carry-ons until now, but Southwest Chief Executive Bob Jordan said the prospect of running out of bin space is still a pain point for customers.

"Any way you can stress out of that, which obviously the higher capacity bins do, the better," he said.

Airlines have been bringing back prepandemic amenities like onboard drinks, and taking other steps to appeal to corporate travelers and others will-

ing to pay up for premium features like extra leg room as the pandemic recedes and travelers take long-delayed trips.

Companies are starting to put employees back on the road after two years, and airline executives say a corporate travel rebound is under way, with business travel revenues climbing back to 70%-to-80% of 2019 levels.

United Airlines Holdings Inc. last year announced a large aircraft order that it said would help it add more premium seats. It is outfitting its new and existing planes with larger overhead bins and screens in seat backs.

Ed Bastian, **Delta Air Lines** Inc.'s chief executive, told reporters last week that the airline has found customers—even leisure travelers—are willing to pay up for higher-end offerings, so much so that returning corporate travelers often find competition for the seats they are used to.

Southwest has often taken a different approach to passenger experience than many ri-

vals. It doesn't have first-class seats, airport clubs or fancy meals, steering clear of marketing its flights as a luxurious experience. But by offering low fares and spurning fees for things like checked baggage and flight changes, Southwest has grown into the largest carrier of domestic passengers and one of the most popular, frequently earning high scores in customer satisfaction surveys.

Southwest ranked the highest in the economy category in J.D. Power's annual North American airline-passenger satisfaction survey, released Wednesday. But overall passenger satisfaction fell sharply across the board, J.D. Power found, amid higher fares and fuller planes.

Southwest executives said this week their research and polling has shown that fast internet, power outlets at seats to charge devices and feeling confident they'll be able to store carry-ons overhead are important to many customers. Southwest said its invest-

ment was included in its previously announced spending plans for coming years.

The airline's improvements involve several new features, some of which it has been evaluating since before the pandemic decimated travel demand in 2020. It plans to upgrade in-flight internet offerings to offer faster connections.

The airline will have installed new hardware on 50 of its aircraft by the end of May, and is temporarily offering free internet on some flights in an effort to evaluate how well the improved service holds up with large volumes of passengers using it. Southwest currently offers internet access for \$8 a day.

The airline will also install USB power outlets at every seat on its MAX jets starting next year. Rivals have been adding power outlets at seats for years as customers have become increasingly concerned about keeping devices charged, though not all airlines offer them throughout the entire cabin or on every aircraft type.

Hawaiian Airlines Bets on Sea Gliders For Island Hopping

By ALISON SIDER

Hawaiian Holdings Inc. is investing in a company developing electric sea gliders that the airline hopes to fly on short hops between islands.

The battery-powered sea gliders being developed by **Regent**, a Boston-based startup, are a hybrid of a boat and a plane. They would cruise 5 to 30 feet above the waves on average, flying on a cushion of air that keeps the plane aloft, known as the "ground effect."

Flying between the Hawaiian islands is a major source of business for Hawaiian Airlines, accounting for roughly 20% of its passenger revenue in 2019, the year before the pandemic. The distances are short but traffic volumes are high—more than half the seats Hawaiian flew in 2019 were along inter-island routes.

While Hawaiian hasn't placed an order for the aircraft, the airline said its investment will give it a role in the design of the 100-seat sea glider, which Regent said it hoped could enter commercial service by 2028.

Hawaiian's move comes as airlines face pressure from customers and governments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Carriers are increasingly exploring nascent technologies, investing in and ordering new aircraft still being developed in hopes that something takes off.

The challenge is there are few good replacements for jet fuel. Big airplanes that fly long distances and carry lots of passengers require more energy than can be provided by current battery technology.

Regent's sea gliders will be what are known as "wing-in-ground effect" vehicles—flying no higher than the length of the glider's wingspan above the water. That reduces drag and increases lift, allowing the

sea gliders to carry larger numbers of passengers, the company said.

This way of flying helps extend the sea gliders' range beyond what some other types of electric aircraft currently being developed can manage, Regent co-founder and Chief Executive Billy Thalheimer said.

Regent's planned sea gliders would be able to travel a range of 180 miles port-to-port, and can fly at a speed of 180 miles an hour using existing battery technology.

Since the sea gliders don't take off from airport runways, Hawaiian hopes it could use them to fly between harbors and other infrastructure, expanding the market for island hopping, said Avi Mannis, Hawaiian's chief marketing and communications officer.

"The technology may fill an important niche," Mr. Mannis said.

The sea gliders would float like boats while in the harbor and then rise up on hydrofoils, devices that lift boats above the water and allow them to accelerate fast enough to lift off the water.

Mr. Thalheimer said the hydrofoils offer "wave tolerance" that will make for a smooth ride as the sea gliders pull into the open water at 20 to 50 miles an hour before lifting off. Digital flight control systems will react to gusts and keep the vessel above the notoriously rough seas between the islands, he said.

Other operators see seaplane service as a solution for crowded coastal markets, but the existing aircraft are generally much smaller. **Tailwind Air** LLC has launched scheduled seaplane flights between New York and Boston and other nearby destinations using Cessna Caravan EX amphibian seaplanes, with space for eight passengers.



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BUSINESS NEWS

Novelis Plans New Aluminum Plant

Company to build large facility amid growing demand, mostly in beverage industry

By Bob Tyra

Novelis Inc. said it intends to build the largest aluminum-rolling plant in the U.S. in nearly 40 years to supply a growing market for beverage cans.

The planned plant, near Mobile, Ala., will have a capacity to produce 600,000 metric tons of aluminum sheet a year, the company said. About two-thirds of the output will go to can makers, the company said, including Colorado's Ball Corp., which provides empty cans to the beverage industry. The remaining third of the plant's capacity will make aluminum sheet for the automotive industry.

Aluminum rollers in the U.S. scaled down can-sheet production for years in favor of higher-margin aluminum for pickup-truck beds, trunk lids and other components, as auto makers switched to lighter-weight aluminum from steel to improve fuel economy. The U.S. market for cans was mostly flat between 2010 and 2018, executives said.

Demand for beverage cans has rebounded since then, as the beverage industry seeks to reduce reliance on plastic containers amid consumer concerns about waste. Cans also received a boost during the pandemic when restrictions on bars and restaurants caused consumers to buy more canned beverages for consumption at home. Can production in the U.S. increased by nearly 20% from 2018 to 2021, when 133 billion cans



Aluminum casting at a Novelis plant in Berea, Kentucky. The company plans to build a large new facility near Mobile, Ala.

were produced.

Of the new beverages introduced in the U.S. market in recent years, three-quarters are sold in cans, including flavored carbonated water, wine, energy drinks and drinks mixed with liquor, Novelis said.

"Beverage companies are increasingly turning to aluminum to be the packaging of choice," said Steve Fisher, chief executive of Atlanta-based Novelis. "We have a lot of confidence in the sustainable growth in this market."

Novelis said the Alabama plant will cost about \$2.5 billion and is expected to start operations in 2025. The plant will eventually employ up to 1,000 people. Mr. Fisher said

the plant will be built with the expectation that it will be expanded within a few years of opening.

The new plant will supply can sheet to Ball, which has opened four new can plants in recent years, with two more under construction. By the end of 2022, Ball expects its production capacity for cans to have increased by up to 25% since 2018.

"This is a huge relief for us to see further investment," said Dan Fisher, Ball's chief executive, about the Alabama plant. "We'll need at least one more facility this size, if not two, to keep pace with the growth by 2030."

Novelis's Mr. Fisher said he

expects U.S. can-sheet demand to outpace production by about 300,000 metric tons this year and the company anticipates the shortfall growing to 500,000 tons by 2030.

Can manufacturers have been relying more on imports of foreign can sheet. Imports last year grew by 38% from 2020 to 222,546 metric tons, according to the Aluminum Association, the industry's trade group. U.S. demand for can sheet last year rose by 8.4% from 2020, while domestic shipments of can sheet in 2021 rose by 5.7%.

In 2018, the Trump administration levied a 10% tariff on imported aluminum to encourage more domestic production.

Since then, the U.S. aluminum industry has mostly focused on investing in melting aluminum scrap to offset dwindling American production of raw aluminum from bauxite ore. The companies that have ramped up aluminum sheet production have mostly done so at existing plants that are decades old.

Aluminum-industry executives said low margins and stagnant demand kept companies from investing in more capacity until recently. An attempt by startup company Braidy Industries Inc. to build a \$1.7 billion rolling mill in Ashland, Ky., a few years ago foundered because of a lack of investors.

Beyond Meat Loss Exceeds Estimates

By Denny Jacob

Beyond Meat Inc. reported a wider-than-expected loss for its recently completed quarter because of higher spending, sending shares of the meat-alternative maker lower in after-hours trading.

Beyond Meat Chief Executive Ethan Brown said cost-intensive measures the company took to support strategic launches weighed on its bottom line. "We recognize that the decisions we are making today in support of our long-run ambition have contributed to challenging near-term results," he said.

Production of the company's jerky, which made its debut in U.S. grocery stores in March, was expensive and inefficient, said Phil Hardin, Beyond Meat's financial chief, with some individual batches of jerky being processed across different facilities. Beyond Meat said its gross margin fell to 0.2% of sales in the latest quarter from 30.2% a year earlier but that it expects margins to improve later this year.

Mr. Hardin said on the company's conference call that Beyond Meat was reorienting the jerky's production, consolidating operations and reducing related transportation costs.

Following the results, shares of Beyond Meat fell 22% in after-hours trading to \$20.30, below the stock's 2019 initial public offering price of \$25. Through the close Wednesday, the stock is down 60% this year.

Beyond Meat recorded a loss of \$100.5 million, or \$1.58 a share, for the quarter ended April 2, compared with a loss of \$27.3 million, or 43 cents a share, a year earlier. Analysts, on average, were expecting a loss of 98 cents a share. The El Segundo, Calif., company said its loss in the first quarter included \$1 million in expenses related to early debt-extinguishment costs.

The latest results compound Beyond Meat's recent struggles. The company reported a loss in February, citing weaker demand for its products in U.S. supermarkets that offset higher revenue from its international and U.S. food-service business.

Like other food makers, the company is battling inflation that is pushing consumers to buy staples in smaller quantities and switch to cheaper, store-name brands.

Net revenue increased 1.2% to \$109.5 million from \$108.2 million. Analysts polled by FactSet expected \$112.4 million. Beyond Meat said its U.S. retail sales increased 6.9% from a year earlier, helped by the introduction of its jerky product but hurt by lower sales for other products.

Casinos Post Best Month Ever as Gamblers Return

By Joseph De Avila

Gamblers, eager to get back to slot machines and blackjack tables, have shrugged off inflation increases and fueled a record-breaking March for the casino industry.

U.S. casinos reported \$5.31 billion in revenue in March, the highest monthly revenue in the industry's history, according to a report released Wednesday by the American Gaming Association. Gambling revenue was \$14.31 billion from January through March, a record for a first quarter. The figures exclude revenue from casinos run by Native American tribes.

"We are off to the best start we ever had as an industry," Bill Miller, chief executive of the AGA, said in an interview.

The Covid-19 pandemic dealt a blow to the casino industry in 2020. Revenue dropped to \$30 billion for the year as parts of the economy shut down. The 31% decline from 2019 marked the lowest gambling revenue total since 2003, according to the AGA.

But the industry has bounced back as Covid restrictions have been lifted, and casinos have benefited from pent-up demand from customers eager to spend money on leisure and entertainment. And gamblers haven't been put off from visiting casino destinations such as Las Vegas because prices for food and accommodations have risen.

The casino industry reported \$53.03 billion in revenue in 2021, a 21.5% increase from the previous high set in



Both MGM Resorts International and Wynn Resorts recorded large jumps in Las Vegas revenue.

2019, according to the AGA.

Revenue figures for 2021 aren't available yet for tribal-run casinos, but they are expected to show similar growth, Mr. Miller said. Casinos run by 248 federally recognized tribes across 29 states generated \$27.8 billion in revenue in 2020, a decline of 19.5% from the previous year,

according to the National Indian Gaming Commission.

Last year's strong performance at casinos has carried into this year. Gamblers spent \$8.19 billion on slot machines during the first quarter, a 19% increase from the same period a year earlier, according to the AGA. Table games brought in \$2.38 billion for casinos, a

43% jump.

Las Vegas recorded strong revenue growth. **MGM Resorts International** reported that Las Vegas Strip casino revenue doubled to \$475 million during the first quarter, while **Wynn Resorts Ltd.** reported a 55.5% increase in Las Vegas casino revenue, to \$124.3 million.

Moderna CFO Exits Biotech

Continued from page B1
ous reasons for the departures, including a need to find people with more global experience to manage the company's rapid growth. Moderna now employs 3,200 people, nearly quadrupling the workforce it had at the start of the pandemic.

Mr. Gomez's departure stemmed from Dentsply's financial reporting investigation, which the company made public in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission on Tuesday.

Dentsply, of Charlotte, N.C., makes dental drills and X-ray machines. Its board's audit committee began the investigation in March, the company said in its filing, after current and former employees had made allegations regarding certain financial reporting matters.

The Dentsply investigation is focused on the company's use of incentives to sell products to distributors in the second half of 2021 and whether those incentives were properly accounted for, according to the SEC filing.

The company said it was also investigating whether the impact of the sales in question was adequately disclosed to the SEC. Dentsply also is investigating allegations that certain former and current members of senior management directed the company's use of the incentives and other actions to achieve executive compensation targets in 2021, according to the SEC filing. The filing didn't identify the executives.

"It is around the use of incentives with dealers and the implication of those incentives as it relates to the accounting of that, as well as whether those incentives were directed by executives of the company, both former executives as well as potentially executives that are still here, to hit compensation targets," Dentsply Interim Chief Executive John Groetelaars said on an earnings call Tuesday.

Dentsply last month abruptly named Mr. Groetelaars as interim chief executive and fired Don Casey as chief executive and removed him from the board.

Mr. Casey was once a top executive at Johnson & John-

son and had previously been a senior executive at Cardinal Health, where Mr. Gomez had worked for 13 years before joining Dentsply in 2019.

Mr. Casey didn't respond to a request for comment.

Mr. Gomez, 54 years old, resigned April 11 as Dentsply's CFO to take the same post at Moderna, of Cambridge, Mass.

Hiring companies face challenges learning about internal probes at publicly traded firms, partly because they often won't call references working with the recruit to avoid alerting

other public company.

When Mr. Gomez resigned to take the Moderna job, Dentsply said in an SEC filing his "decision to resign is not the result of any dispute or disagreement with the Company, the Company's management or the Board of Directors of the Company on any matter relating to the Company's operations, policies or practices."

Dentsply provided Mr. Gomez with compensation valued at \$3.6 million for 2021, including salary, stock awards and bonus, according to a Dentsply SEC filing.

In his new job, Mr. Gomez was taking an important role at a biotech that had helped pioneer a new gene-based technology called messenger RNA and brought to market one of the world's most widely used Covid-19 vaccines.

Analysts expected Mr. Gomez to play an important role in Moderna's efforts to keep sales increasing after the pandemic, including potential deals to add to the company's pipeline and portfolio. Moderna said Mr. Gomez will receive a year's pay of \$700,000 as part of his severance package. Mr. Gomez will forfeit his \$500,000 signing bonus and other bonus eligibility, the company said.

—Colin Kellaher, Jennifer Williams-Alvarez and Nina Trentmann contributed to this article.

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—Colin Kellaher, Jennifer Williams-Alvarez and Nina Trentmann contributed to this article.

Buyout Bid By Prologis Rebuffed

Continued from page B1

been one of the best performing commercial real-estate sectors in recent years because of the explosive growth in online commerce, which requires cavernous warehouses for storage and fulfillment operations. E-commerce was bolstered during the pandemic as more consumers stayed home and did their shopping online.

Recent comments from some companies have rattled the growth story.

Shares of industrial real-estate companies such as Prologis and Duke Realty fell after Amazon last month reported a loss in the first quarter of 2022. Amazon Chief Executive Andy Jassy spooked the industrial market at the time when he said that the company was "no longer chasing physical or staffing capacity."

Analysts have also questioned whether the growth in demand for industrial space is sustainable given the glut this market has suffered in the past.

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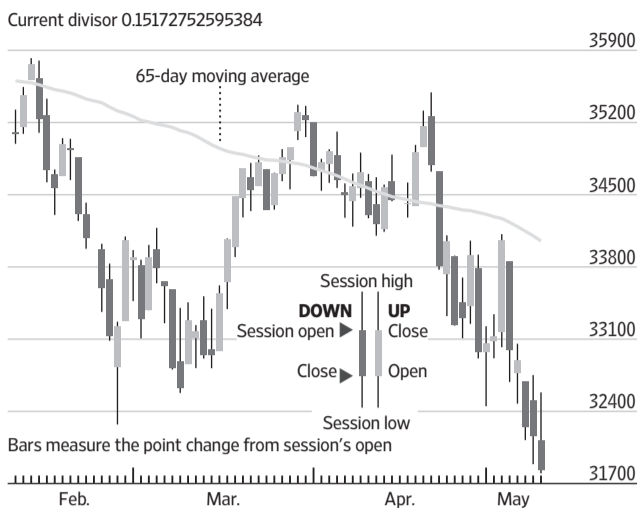
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MARKETS DIGEST

EQUITIES

Dow Jones Industrial Average

31834.11 ▼326.63, or 1.02%
 Last 18.09 Year ago 28.98
 Trailing P/E ratio 18.09 28.98
 P/E estimate * 17.39 20.73
 Dividend yield 2.22 1.78
 All-time high 36799.65, 01/04/22



*Weekly P/E data based on as-reported earnings from Birinyi Associates Inc; †Based on Nasdaq-100 Index

S&P 500 Index

3935.18 ▼65.87, or 1.65%
 Last 22.58 Year ago 37.89
 Trailing P/E ratio * 22.58 37.89
 P/E estimate * 18.25 22.97
 Dividend yield * 1.49 1.37
 All-time high 4796.56, 01/03/22



Nasdaq Composite Index

11364.24 ▼373.44, or 3.18%
 Last 28.96 Year ago 36.73
 Trailing P/E ratio * 28.96 36.73
 P/E estimate * 22.86 28.79
 Dividend yield * 0.82 0.71
 All-time high: 16057.44, 11/19/21



Major U.S. Stock-Market Indexes

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
Dow Jones									
Industrial Average	32584.02	31798.86	31834.11	-326.63	-1.02	36799.65	31834.11	-5.2	-12.4
Transportation Avg	14699.45	14243.58	14291.09	-171.19	-1.18	17039.38	14000.78	-6.9	-13.3
Utility Average	1007.96	983.69	991.15	6.92	0.70	1071.75	869.74	11.5	1.1
Total Stock Market	40576.34	39280.41	39343.92	-718.73	-1.79	48929.18	39343.92	-6.7	-19.1
Barron's 400	934.10	899.89	900.96	-16.37	-1.78	1127.20	900.96	-7.0	-18.6
Nasdaq Stock Market									
Nasdaq Composite	11844.51	11339.18	11364.24	-373.44	-3.18	16057.44	11364.24	-12.8	-27.4
Nasdaq-100	12470.89	11939.09	11967.56	-378.30	-3.06	16573.34	11967.56	-8.0	-26.7
S&P									
500 Index	4049.09	3928.82	3935.18	-65.87	-1.65	4796.56	3935.18	-3.1	-17.4
MidCap 400	2436.02	2344.95	2348.01	-41.57	-1.74	2910.70	2348.01	-10.7	-17.4
SmallCap 600	1189.72	1145.65	1147.42	-19.60	-1.68	1466.02	1147.42	-11.4	-18.1

	High	Low	Latest Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg YTD	% chg 3-yr. ann.
Other Indexes									
Russell 2000	1791.85	1715.77	1718.14	-43.65	-2.48	2442.74	1718.14	-19.5	-23.5
NYSE Composite	15290.63	14887.64	14902.14	-123.60	-0.82	17353.76	14902.14	-7.1	-13.2
Value Line	563.53	542.96	543.51	-10.92	-1.97	696.40	543.51	-15.5	-19.1
NYSE Arca Biotech	4456.62	4284.80	4291.78	-112.55	-2.56	6022.37	4265.88	-21.5	-22.2
NYSE Arca Pharma	821.25	804.34	805.19	-6.86	-0.84	887.27	714.12	11.7	-2.7
KBW Bank	111.39	106.68	106.79	-1.93	-1.78	147.56	106.79	-17.1	-19.2
PHLX ^S Gold/Silver	132.86	127.61	128.01	-0.37	-0.29	167.76	117.06	-16.7	-3.4
PHLX ^S Oil Service	73.90	70.21	70.37	0.40	0.57	87.06	48.31	16.8	33.5
PHLX ^S Semiconductor	2937.39	2806.99	2811.94	-88.19	-3.04	4039.51	2811.94	-14.3	-28.7
Cboe Volatility	34.39	30.69	32.56	-0.43	-1.30	36.45	15.01	18.0	89.1

^SNasdaq PHLX Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Late Trading

Most-active and biggest movers among NYSE, NYSE Arca, NYSE Amer. and Nasdaq issues from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. ET as reported by electronic trading services, securities dealers and regional exchanges. Minimum share price of \$2 and minimum after-hours volume of 50,000 shares.

Most-active issues in late trading

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	Last	Net chg	After-Hours % chg	High	Low
SPDR S&P 500	SPY	10,562.5	393.29	0.54	0.14	407.24	392.31
Microsoft	MSFT	7,328.8	260.65	0.10	0.04	262.43	260.20
Invesco QQQ Trust I	QQQ	7,047.5	292.15	0.31	0.11	300.47	279.37
Apple	AAPL	5,463.1	146.38	-0.12	-0.08	147.20	145.91
Disney	DIS	5,250.4	102.60	-2.61	-2.48	112.33	100.20
TAL Education Group ADR	TAL	4,109.8	3.33	-0.04	-1.19	3.39	3.33
Petroleo Brasileiro ADR	PBR	3,955.2	14.08	...	unch.	14.14	14.08
Vanguard Small-Cap Value	VBR	3,590.3	156.07	...	unch.	157.07	156.07

Percentage gainers...

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	Last	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
Applovin	APP	916.6	34.45	7.17	26.28	41.35	27.28
Coupage	CPNG	1,973.8	11.60	1.93	19.96	12.25	9.41
Bumble C I A	BMBL	490.8	19.58	1.95	11.06	20.67	17.50
Sonos	SONO	775.6	20.96	1.95	10.26	23.43	18.26
Inspirato	ISPO	118.1	5.35	0.43	8.74	6.10	4.80

...And losers

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	Last	Net chg	% chg	High	Low
Dutch Bros	BROS	1,959.5	22.29	-12.08	-35.15	35.00	21.12
Beyond Meat	BYND	1,007.0	20.50	-5.67	-21.67	26.57	19.06
Redbox Entertainment	RDBX	372.3	3.00	-0.20	-6.25	3.29	2.88
AmerisourceBergen	ABC	326.5	151.50	-9.80	-6.08	161.35	150.39
MicroStrategy	MSTR	483.3	158.94	-9.26	-5.51	172.11	152.16

Trading Diary

Volume, Advancers, Decliners

	NYSE	NYSE Amer.
Total volume*	1,204,682,007	17,208,184
Adv. volume*	353,414,667	3,134,693
Decl. volume*	838,594,656	13,579,056
Issues traded	3,522	285
Advances	1,032	81
Declines	2,372	191
Unchanged	118	13
New highs	13	...
New lows	784	78
Closing Arms*	0.90	1.92
Block trades*	5,251	196

*Primary market NYSE, NYSE American NYSE Arca only.

†(TRIN) A comparison of the number of advancing and declining issues with the volume of shares rising and falling. An Arms of less than 1 indicates buying demand; above 1 indicates selling pressure.

International Stock Indexes

Region/Country	Index	Close	Net chg	Latest % chg	YTD % chg
World	MSCI ACWI	619.54	-4.84	-0.77	-17.9
	MSCI ACWI ex-USA	286.96	2.24	0.79	-16.7
	MSCI World	2652.59	-24.66	-0.92	-17.9
	MSCI Emerging Markets	1011.22	4.00	0.40	-17.9
Americas	MSCI AC Americas	1498.11	-24.51	-1.61	-18.0
Canada	S&P/TSX Comp	19837.25	-52.81	-0.27	-6.5
Latin Amer.	MSCIEM Latin America	2195.52	36.35	1.68	3.1
Brazil	BOVESPA	104396.94	1286.96	1.25	-0.4
Chile	S&PIPISA	2937.32	-12.70	-0.43	4.7
Mexico	S&P/BMV IPC	49276.23	160.37	0.33	-7.5
EMEA	STOXX Europe 600	427.59	7.30	1.74	-12.3
Eurozone	Euro STOXX	407.94	9.05	2.27	-14.8
Belgium	Bel-20	3958.30	56.71	1.45	-8.2
Denmark	OMX Copenhagen 20	1619.05	-10.80	-0.66	-13.1
France	CAC 40	6269.73	152.82	2.50	-12.3
Germany	DAX	13828.64	293.90	2.17	-12.9
Israel	Tel Aviv	1895.23	21.01	1.12	-4.2
Italy	FTSE MIB	23724.20	654.42	2.84	-13.2
Netherlands	AEX	682.70	12.96	1.94	-14.4
Russia	RTS Index	1123.93	35.91	3.30	-29.6
South Africa	FTSE/JSE All-Share	68416.41	1449.68	2.16	-7.2
Spain	IBEX 35	8312.60	173.400	2.13	-4.6
Sweden	OMX Stockholm	796.59	19.09	2.46	-23.2
Switzerland	Swiss Market	11553.66	11.94	0.10	-10.3
Turkey	BIST 100	2453.94	-36.23	-1.46	32.1
U.K.	FTSE 100	7347.66	104.44	1.44	-0.5
U.K.	FTSE 250	19647.15	262.19	1.35	-16.3
Asia-Pacific	MSCI AC Asia Pacific	159.96	0.07	0.04	-17.2
Australia	S&P/ASX 200	7064.70	13.54	0.19	-5.1
China	Shanghai Composite	3058.70	22.86	0.75	-16.0
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	19824.57	190.88	0.97	-15.3
India	S&P BSE Sensex	54088.39	-276.46	-0.51	-7.2
Japan	NIKKEI 225	26213.64	46.54	0.18	-9.0
Singapore	Straits Times	3226.07	-8.12	-0.25	3.3
South Korea	KOSPI	2592.27	-4.29	-0.17	-12.9
Taiwan	TAIEX	16006.25	-55.45	-0.35	-12.1
Thailand	SET	1613.34	-9.44	-0.58	-2.7

Sources: FactSet; Dow Jones Market Data

Percentage Gainers...

Company	Symbol	Close	Net chg	% chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low	% chg
Sunlands Technology ADR	STG	3.29	0.84	34.29	14.38	2.16	-76.1
Treco Resources	TREC	9.51	1.96	25.96	9.74	7.46	22.6
Golden Matrix Group	GMGI	4.25	0.82	23.91	12.94	3.29	-65.0
Charge Enterprises	CRGE	3.65	0.66	22.07	8.46	2.51	34.7
Inspired Entertainment	INSE	10.65	1.87	21.30	15.82	7.40	40.9
Direxion S&P Biotech Bear	LABD	81.35	14.07	20.91	82.20	16.67	208.6
H&R Block	HRB	28.41	4.64	19.52	28.63	21.08	21.8
Blue Water Vaccines	BWV	6.01	0.94	18.54	90.90	3.26	...
Alpha Teknova	TKNO	12.16	1.77	17.04	30.89	8.51	...
Torm	TRMD	11.35	1.57	16.05	11.50	6.17	26.0
Celsius Holdings	CELH	47.42	6.11	14.79	110.22	38.31	2.8
Grocery Outlet Holding	GO	35.65	4.58	14.74	37.36	21.01	7.9
Sylvamo	SLVM	44.68	5.74	14.74	45.57	23.10	...
System1	SST	11.82	1.43	13.76	37.10	7.70	20.1
CI&T	CINT	13.93	1.65	13.44	22.50	9.88	...

Most Active Stocks

Company	Symbol	Volume (000)	% chg from 65-day avg	Latest Session % chg	52-Week High	52-Week Low
ProShares UltraPro QQQ	TQQQ	263,416	114.8	28.76	-8.90	91.68
ProSh UltraPro Shrt QQQ	SOQQ	173,9				

COMMODITIES

Futures Contracts

Metal & Petroleum Futures						
	Open	Contract High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Copper-High (CMX) -25,000 lbs.; \$ per lb.						
May	4.1550	4.2450	4.1550	4.2125	0.0580	3,079
July	4.1550	4.2500	4.1485	4.2090	0.0545	111,174
Gold (CMX) -100 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
May	1841.50	1851.00	1840.60	1852.60	12.70	2,557
June	1836.60	1857.80	1830.60	1853.70	12.70	323,190
July	1841.50	1858.40	1837.40	1857.10	12.70	154
Aug	1844.90	1864.50	1838.00	1861.00	12.60	190,070
Oct	1847.30	1870.40	1845.90	1868.40	12.90	13,130
Dec	1861.60	1879.20	1854.00	1876.90	13.10	32,485
Palladium (NYM) -50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
May				2008.10	-33.90	1
June	2042.50	2075.50	1997.50	2007.90	-35.80	5,047
Platinum (NYM) -50 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
May				995.70	42.20	29
June	945.70	991.70	942.80	989.80	42.60	53,974
Silver (CMX) -5,000 troy oz.; \$ per troy oz.						
May	21.415	21.895	21.210	21.550	0.160	1,712
July	21.210	21.970	21.200	21.575	0.151	115,553
Crude Oil, Light Sweet (NYM) -1,000 bbls.; \$ per bbl.						
June	99.00	106.44	98.20	105.71	5.95	176,383
July	97.74	104.74	96.93	104.03	5.58	212,333
Aug	96.25	102.81	95.47	102.20	5.33	117,875
Dec	90.50	95.68	89.90	95.40	4.45	242,977
June'23	84.56	88.76	83.90	88.59	4.01	126,283
Dec	80.48	84.28	79.93	84.14	3.81	127,295
NY Harbor ULSD (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
June	3.9528	4.0614	3.9214	3.9512	0.190	48,488
July	3.6715	3.8150	3.6649	3.7546	0.0753	61,738
Gasoline-NY RB08 (NYM) -42,000 gal.; \$ per gal.						
June	3.5172	3.7087	3.5057	3.6855	1.440	85,578
July	3.4238	3.5930	3.4069	3.5736	1.387	71,144
Natural Gas (NYM) -10,000 MMBtu.; \$ per MMBtu.						
June	7.312	7.721	7.296	7.640	0.255	84,397
July	7.395	7.803	7.385	7.722	0.260	177,584
Sept	7.380	7.720	7.336	7.661	0.261	85,028
Oct	7.365	7.714	7.327	7.650	0.259	95,136
Jan'23	7.623	7.981	7.600	7.921	0.258	62,652
May	4.520	4.597	4.463	4.548	0.052	60,719

Agriculture Futures						
	Open	Contract High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Corn (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
May	788.00	802.75	788.00	802.25	15.75	1,326
July	776.50	790.50	775.50	788.50	13.25	625,196
Oats (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
May	715.00	715.00	715.00	632.25	4.00	1
July	597.25	612.00	591.50	603.25	4.00	1,950
Soybeans (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
May	1629.00	1658.00	1629.00	1650.25	20.25	318
July	1593.50	1615.00	1587.50	1606.75	14.50	313,102
Soybean Meal (CBT) -100 tons; \$ per ton.						
May	410.00	412.20	408.40	400.60	-7.30	79
July	402.00	407.20	397.30	397.90	-3.60	168,087
Soybean Oil (CBT) -60,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
May	88.45	89.07	87.50	89.45	1.49	40
July	81.04	83.52	80.60	83.45	2.41	158,659
Rough Rice (CBT) -2,000 cwt.; \$ per cwt.						
May	16.63	16.63	16.60	16.69	10.15	15
July	16.93	17.17	16.87	17.00	0.09	7,801
Wheat (CBT) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
May	1109.25	1115.00	1100.00	1108.75	25.50	241
July	1094.75	1126.50	1094.25	1113.00	20.25	164,283
Wheat (KC) -5,000 bu.; cents per bu.						
May				1186.25	18.00	10
July	1175.25	1207.25	1175.00	1200.50	25.50	96,439
Cattle-Feeder (CME) -50,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
May	158.800	159.375	157.350	158.150	-0.775	3,517
Aug	171.350	171.500	169.300	170.000	-1.850	25,259
Cattle-Live (CME) -40,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
June	132.525	134.875	132.350	133.575	1.175	85,798
Aug	134.200	135.525	133.675	134.650	0.550	111,901
Hogs-Lean (CME) -40,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
May	100.600	100.950	100.275	100.925	-0.150	1,190
June	100.950	101.900	99.500	100.850	-0.725	52,719
Lumber (CME) -110,000 bd. ft.; \$ per 1,000 bd. ft.						
May	1011.00	1025.00	1007.50	1007.50	-14.50	133
July	797.60	806.40	783.00	786.10	-15.00	1,680
Milk (CME) -200,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
May	24.70	24.95	24.67	24.89	0.23	5,479
June	23.51	23.99	23.38	23.81	0.30	5,665
Cocoa (ICE-US) -10 metric tons; \$ per ton.						
May				2,517	44	10
July	2,455	2,504	2,455	2,489	44	115,916
Coffee (ICE-US) -37,500 lbs.; cents per lb.						
May				220.10	16.10	70

	Open	Contract High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
July	204.05	220.45	204.05	219.90	16.10	95,858
Sugar-World (ICE-US) -112,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
July	18.62	18.73	18.44	18.55	0.01	333,384
Oct	18.74	18.82	18.58	18.69	0.03	181,981
Sugar-Domestic (ICE-US) -112,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
July				36.45	0.15	888
Cotton (ICE-US) -50,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
July	143.18	144.96	142.36	143.60	0.66	87,566
Dec	124.05	125.84	123.36	124.75	0.58	79,795
Orange Juice (ICE-US) -15,000 lbs.; cents per lb.						
July	172.20	173.45	166.30	168.50	-4.10	9,883
Sept	167.00	167.20	163.00	165.10	-2.70	1,224

Interest Rate Futures						
	Open	Contract High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Ultra Treasury Bonds (CBT) -\$100,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
June	154-140	157-070	152-000	156-310	2-15 0	1,264,212
Sept				156-210	2-16 0	806
Treasury Bonds (CBT) -\$100,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
June	138-130	139-280	137-070	139-200	1-01 0	1,173,593
Sept				138-210	1-01 0	33,957
Treasury Notes (CBT) -\$100,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
June	118-245	119-130	118-035	119-085	15 5	3,670,556
Sept	118-125	118-285	117-180	118-245	16 5	52,115
5 Yr. Treasury Notes (CBT) -\$100,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
June	112-255	113-050	112-097	112-305	4 7	3,779,279
Sept				112-167	5 5	34,398
2 Yr. Treasury Notes (CBT) -\$200,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
May	105-197	105-228	105-123	105-190	-9 9	2,260,880
Sept				105-071	-6 6	3,894
30 Day Federal Funds (CBT) -\$5,000,000; 100 - daily avg.						
May	99.2325	99.2350	99.2325	99.2350	0.025	361,417
July	98.5650	98.5750	98.5300	98.5650	-0.050	325,682
10 Yr. Del. Int. Rate Swaps (CBT) -\$100,000; pts 32nds of 100%						
June				86-235	17 5	12,437
Three-Month SOFR (CME) -\$1,000,000; 100 - daily avg.						
March	99.4925	99.4950	99.4900	99.4900	0.000	513,125
June'23	96.8950	96.9600	96.7350	96.8950	0.150	656,436
Eurodollar (CME) -\$1,000,000; pts of 100%						
May	98.5100	98.5325	98.4875	98.5150	-0.100	127,493
June	98.1750	98.1800	98.1300	98.1650	-0.100	1,000,476
Dec	96.9400	96.9850	96.7900	96.9000	-0.400	1,341,100
Dec'23	96.7550	96.8200	96.6250	96.7700	0.250	1,181,418

Currency Futures						
	Open	Contract High	Low	Settle	Chg	Open interest
Japanese Yen (CME) -¥12,500,000; \$ per 100¥						
May	76.78	77.26	76.46	77.08	0.039	493
June	76.76	77.33	76.52	77.15	0.039	243,071
Canadian Dollar (CME) -CAD 100,000; \$ per CAD						
May	77.32	77.39	76.70	77.03	0.025	610
June	76.75	77.39	76.68	77.02	0.026	140,177
British Pound (CME) -£62,500; \$ per £						
May	1.2338	1.2400	1.2239	1.2270	-0.004	935
June	1.2314	1.2400	1.2236	1.2269	-0.004	257,984
Swiss Franc (CME) -CHF 125,000; \$ per CHF						
June	1.0057	1.0145	1.0051	1.0086	0.024	50,822
Sept	1.0153	1.0212	1.0120	1.0155	0.024	364
Australian Dollar (CME) -AUD 100,000; \$ per AUD						
May	69.38	70.54	69.29	69.48	0.007	155
June	69.43	70.58	69.31	69.51	0.008	152,224
Mexican Peso (CME) -MXN 500,000; \$ per MXN						
May				0.4927	0.0022	10
June	0.4873	0.4912	0.4856	0.4901	0.0021	153,415
Euro (CME) -€125,000; \$ per €						
May	1.0539	1.0579	1.0505	1.0533	...	1,622
June	1.0546	1.0592	1.0517	1.0545	-0.001	689,329
Index Futures						
Mini DJ Industrial Average (CBT) -\$5 x index						
June	32048	32506	31715	31743	-344	82,139
Sept	32035	32481	31702	31730	-345	793
Mini S&P 500 (CME) -\$50 x index						
June	3990.50	4050.50	3923.75	3930.25	-66.50	2,224,562
Sept	3994.00	4053.00	3927.75	3933.25	-66.50	23,900
Mini S&P Midcap 400 (CME) -\$100 x index						
June	2380.70	2431.90	2338.90	2342.80	-41.70	60,104
Sept				2350.60	-41.70	3
Mini Nasdaq 100 (CME) -\$20 x index						
June	12328.75	12553.25	11938.50	11969.75	-379.25	246,739
Sept	12370.25	12584.00	11975.25	12005.00	-379.00	2,929
Mini Russell 2000 (CME) -\$50 x index						
June	1758.50	1792.00	1712.30	1715.70	-44.20	524,436
Sept	1761.00	1792.70	1714.40	1717.10	-43.60	513
Mini Russell 1000 (CME) -\$50 x index						
June	2207.50	2217.50	2149.10	2152.80	-38.90	14,041
U.S. Dollar Index (ICE-US) -\$1,000 x index						
June	103.96	104.16	103.41	103.87	-0.07	56,779
Sept	103.81	103.86	103.19	103.65	-0.10	57

Source: FactSet

Cash Prices

These prices reflect buying and selling of a variety of actual or "physical" commodities in the marketplace—separate from the futures price on an exchange, which reflects what the commodity might be worth in future

BANKING & FINANCE

House bills pose risk to users' crypto assets

By PAUL KIERNAN

Cryptocurrency trading platforms might look and feel like regular brokerage apps to everyday users, but regulators have long warned they lack the oversight and investor protections that are built into traditional financial services.

Coimbase Global Inc. acknowledged that reality this week. In its quarterly filings, the crypto-trading firm suggested the digital tokens it holds for its users might not belong to them if push comes to shove.

"Because custodially held crypto assets may be considered to be the property of a bankruptcy estate, in the event

of a bankruptcy, the crypto assets we hold in custody on behalf of our customers could be subject to bankruptcy proceedings, and such customers could be treated as our general unsecured creditors," the company said.

By contrast, securities held for customers by a registered brokerage are legally segregated from the assets of the brokerage, meaning they can't be touched in bankruptcy proceedings.

The Securities Investor Protection Corp., a nonprofit entity set up by Congress in 1970, insures as much as \$500,000 of customers' securities and cash in brokerage accounts.

Trading platforms such as

those operated by Coinbase offer investors a seemingly more user-friendly avenue to cryptocurrency markets than the alternative of setting up a crypto wallet to transact with counterparties.

Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Gary Gensler has frequently spoken to warn investors about the risks associated with the platforms, which aren't overseen by federal market regulators.

Coimbase Chief Executive Brian Armstrong said in a Twitter thread that the disclosure about bankruptcy risks reflected guidelines released by the SEC in March. Those guidelines directed publicly traded crypto trading platforms to re-

port users' assets on their balance sheets.

Coimbase held \$256 billion in cash and cryptocurrencies for its customers at the end of the first quarter. "Your funds are safe at Coimbase, just as they've always been," Mr. Armstrong said. "We have no risk of bankruptcy."

Coimbase's stock fell 26% on Wednesday after it reported on Tuesday evening that it lost hundreds of millions of dollars in the first quarter. So far this year, the exchange's stock price has plunged 80%.

Mr. Armstrong said the firm believes its service that caters to institutional clients has "strong legal protections" in its terms of service.

Crypto Coin Craters

Continued from page B1

ing digital assets that are pegged to the dollar because when they buy or sell, the price is moving only on one side. They also allow for fast trading without the settlement times associated with government-issued currencies, which can take days.

The price of bitcoin fell to \$28,314.54 Wednesday, down 8.5% from its 5 p.m. ET level Tuesday. It has lost about 28% of its value over the past 7 days. It has lost about 24% of

its value over the past week alone.

In the past, TerraUSD maintained its \$1 price by relying on traders who acted as its backstop. When it fell below the peg, traders would burn the stablecoin—removing it from circulation—by exchanging TerraUSD for \$1 worth of new units of Luna. That action reduced the supply of TerraUSD and raised its price.

Conversely, when TerraUSD's value rose above \$1, traders could burn Luna and create new TerraUSD, thus increasing the supply of the stablecoin and lowering its price back toward \$1.

Such a model has drawn criticism because it relies on people's collective willingness to support the cryptocurrency. Without that, the stablecoin can sink quickly.

New Highs and Lows

Table with columns: Stock, 52-Wk % High, 52-Wk % Low, Stock, 52-Wk % High, 52-Wk % Low. Lists various stocks and their performance metrics.

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Mutual Funds

Data provided by LIPPER

Table with columns: Fund, NAV, Chg % YTD, Fund, NAV, Chg % YTD. Lists mutual funds and their performance.

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MARKETS

Rise in CPI Derails Treasury Bond Rally

Report is unwelcome surprise to investors, who were warming to debt securities again

By SAM GOLDFARB

A nascent rally in U.S. government bonds was thrown off balance Wednesday by inflation data that were higher than Wall Street expected, marking the latest twist in a tough year for bond investors.

Treasury yields, which rise when bond prices fall, jumped immediately after the Labor Department said that the consumer-price index excluding volatile food and energy categories climbed 0.6% in April from the previous month. That was above the 0.4% gain in core prices anticipated by economists surveyed by The Wall Street Journal.

Yields then fell, though, as the S&P 500 shed earlier gains and slid more than 1.5% while investors sought out safer assets. The shifts highlighted the complex dynamics confronting investors, with inflation remaining stubbornly high and the Federal Reserve promising a rapid series of interest-rate increases that has already spread pain across markets.

Before Wednesday's data, Treasury yields had fallen sig-

nificantly this week. The slide reflected tentative signs of easing inflationary pressures and hopes among investors that the Fed's expected path of rate increases could be sufficient to control prices after months of surging yields, rising borrowing costs and sliding stocks.

Though the Fed has only raised short-term rates at two meetings this year, its guidance about its future actions heavily influences Treasury yields, which set a floor on the rates paid by business and consumers.

With the 10-year Treasury yield hovering around 3% and 30-year mortgage rates exceeding 5%, investors are calculating whether Fed officials will have to signal even tighter monetary policies than those reflected in bond-market wagers. At the same time, borrowing costs have already risen enough to spark anxieties about a recession.

On Wednesday, analysts said all of those considerations were in play, with the early surge in yields helping to undermine tech stocks in particular, before economic worries sparked broader declines, helping to drive money back to bonds.

In the bond market alone, a shrinking gap on Wednesday between short- and long-term Treasury yields reflected "some concern about growth

in the market," said Leah Traub, a portfolio manager at Lord Abbett.

Investors, she said, have been particularly worried by signs of a slowdown overseas. She expects the economy to avoid a recession, citing the demand for everything from workers to housing.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note settled at 2.918%, according to Tradeweb, down from 2.990% Tuesday but slightly above its early-morning low of 2.915% set before the data release.

The two-year yield finished at 2.629%, up from 2.623% Tuesday and an overnight low of 2.576%.

Wednesday's report did show that overall, year-over-year inflation slowed a bit to 8.3% in April from 8.5% in March. That marked a much-anticipated turn, as prices are no longer were comparable to deeply depressed levels from earlier in the pandemic.

Bond investors, though, were more concerned about the monthly pace of price increases, which they consider a better gauge of where inflation is headed. Stripping out food and energy prices similarly takes out some of the noise in the data, providing a better sense of underlying inflation pressures.

Overall, Wednesday's data was "certainly above expectations," said Ian Lyngen, head



The core consumer-price index rose 0.6% in April.

corporate bonds and mortgage-backed securities—has returned minus 9.9% this year as of Tuesday.

The Nasdaq Composite Index—filled with the stocks of fast-growing but less profitable companies seen as particularly sensitive to interest-rate increases—fell more than 3% Wednesday to extend its year-to-date decline to 27%.

Some analysts argued that Wednesday's inflation data wouldn't change the Fed's calculus very much, largely because the central bank has already committed to a sizable series of interest-rate increases over the next several months. Officials, they said, can afford to see how inflation develops over that time before they signal an even more aggressive path.

"I don't think you can necessarily think that this has thrown the current Fed view out and argues for a new one," said Blake Gwinn, head of U.S. rates strategy at RBC Capital Markets.

Market-based measures of inflation expectations ticked up after Wednesday's data release.

The five-year breakeven inflation rate—a measure of investors' expectations for average annual inflation over the next half-decade—stood Wednesday at 3.01%, according to Tradeweb, up from 2.95% Tuesday.

of U.S. rates strategy at BMO Capital Markets.

Investors were already betting that the Fed will aim to subdue inflation by raising its benchmark federal-funds rate by half a percentage point at its meetings in June and July. Wednesday's data, at a minimum, should support the idea of another such increase in September, Mr. Lyngen said.

Yields on Treasuries largely reflect expectations for what

short-term interest rates will be over the life of a bond. As it stands, interest-rate derivatives suggest that investors expect the fed-funds rate to rise to around 3.2% next year from its current range of 0.75%-1%.

Spiraling interest-rate expectations have dragged down prices across almost all assets this year. The Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate bond index—largely U.S. Treasuries, highly rated

Turmoil Spreads to Junk Bonds

Continued from page B1
That is still well below the recent 11-percentage-point high in March 2020.

"It feels like capitulation today," Mike Scott, a high-yield portfolio manager at Man GLG, said.

Prices of junk bonds fell earlier this year as the Federal Reserve signaled it would raise interest rates quickly, prompting investors to demand higher yields to lend money.

More recently, the losses have been fueled by concerns that inflation and tightening monetary policy will spark a recession. Operational headwinds in industries such as health-care, cable, entertainment and technology have accelerated the downward momentum.

Hospital operator **HCA Healthcare** Inc.'s bonds have

U.S. Treasury yields this year



Sources: Tradeweb ICE close (Treasury yields); FactSet (extra yield); Bloomberg (high-yield bonds)

The extra yield investors demand to hold junk bonds over U.S. Treasury bonds



Average price of high-yield bonds



been dragged down about 3% in recent days to 88 cents on the dollar by concerns about rising labor costs and employee shortages, fund managers said.

The \$3.3 billion bond issued by online used-car auctioneer **Carvana** Co. two weeks ago has since plummeted, hitting buyers of the deal with a 9% loss.

The company struggled to place the debt until alterna-

tive-asset manager **Apollo Global Management** agreed to buy about half of it.

Others are pulling transactions from the market altogether.

Medical-product maker **Bioventus** Inc. last week withdrew a \$415 million bond with a low triple-C credit rating that was meant to pay for an acquisition. "Current market conditions are not conducive for an offering on terms that

would be in the best interest of its stakeholders," the company said then. A spokeswoman for Bioventus declined to comment.

Investors have pulled about \$23 billion out of mutual and exchange-traded funds in the market since the start of February, according to data from Lipper Inc.

"There's nobody coming in to buy," said Jim Schaeffer, a portfolio manager at Aegon

Asset Management. "Usually people think the Fed is going to step in and do something to help, and now the Fed is on the opposite side."

Bargain hunters aren't yet interested in junk debt because safer investment-grade bonds have also lost roughly the same amount, making them a better pick for now, portfolio managers said. Buying investment-grade bonds at a discount during the 2020 coronavirus selloff proved a lucrative trade for many high-yield investors.

The yield of a Bloomberg index of investment-grade bonds has risen to about 3.6% from 1.8% this year, while the average dollar price has fallen to about 93 cents on the dollar from 104. The spread of the bonds over Treasuries widened this year to 0.51 percentage point from 0.35 point. "We're seeing investors favor higher-quality segments of the credit market because they can meet their yield targets there without taking additional risk," said Joe Lind, co-head of high-yield at Neuberger Berman Group LLC.

Hong Kong Moves to Shore Up Currency

By DAVE SEBASTIAN

Hong Kong dipped into its foreign-exchange reserves for the first time in three years to defend its longstanding dollar peg, acting to shore up the local currency against a surging greenback.

The Chinese territory's de facto central bank, the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, on Thursday said it had sold U.S. dollars to buy 1.586 billion Hong Kong dollars, or the equivalent of about \$202 million.

The move was made during New York trading hours Wednesday, the monetary authority said. It acted to stop the local currency trading beyond the weak end of its permitted range of HK\$7.75 to HK\$7.85 per U.S. dollar.

The Hong Kong dollar has been tied to its U.S. equivalent since 1983, helping underpin the city's emergence as one of the world's major financial centers. The monetary authority stands ready to sell U.S. dollars if the local currency gets too weak, or buy them if the Hong Kong dollar becomes too strong.

In recent years, some investors and analysts have questioned the durability of the system as Beijing's grip on Hong Kong has tightened, U.S.-China tensions have risen, and China has sought to bolster international usage of the yuan.

However, the city's authorities have stressed their commitment to the peg. Many market participants say the setup, also known as the Linked Exchange Rate System or LERS, is robust and remains useful to China.

"The LERS has continued to function well, having weathered many economic cycles in its nearly four decades of operation," the monetary authority said in a statement. "We will continue to closely monitor market situations with a view to maintaining monetary and financial stability."

AUCTION RESULTS

Here are the results of Wednesday's Treasury auction. All bids are awarded at a single price at the market-clearing yield. Rates are determined by the difference between that price and the face value.

10-YEAR NOTES	
Applications	\$114,742,176,500
Accepted bids	\$61,194,142,100
*noncompetitively	\$50,979,700
*foreign noncompetitively	\$0
Auction price (rate)	99.414646 (2.943%)
Interest rate	2.975%
Bids at clearing yield accepted	75.08%
Cusip number	91282CEP2

The notes, dated May 16, 2022, mature on May 15, 2032.

Poor Weather Delays Midwest Crop Planting

By PATRICK THOMAS AND KIRK MALTAIS

Farmers are in a race against the clock to get their crops in the ground this week, with planting of corn, soybeans and wheat well behind their usual pace.

Wet and cool temperatures in key parts of the Midwest delayed farmers' planting plans, leaving them days to get crops in the ground before they start to lose out on a big-

ger harvest. **COMMODITIES** If they don't, some grain traders say that high prices for agricultural commodities could rise even more, with supplies thinning as farmers world-wide grapple with tough weather.

On Monday, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said 22% of corn was planted, compared with 50% for the previous-five-year average. For soybeans, 12% was planted, compared with the previous-five-year average of 24%, and 27% of spring wheat was in the ground compared with a typical 47%, according to the USDA.

For corn, the situation is particularly tenuous because corn planted after this week runs an increased risk of yielding less, agronomists say. With global grain markets tight due to poor weather in important growing areas and Russia's war in Ukraine, further disruptions to U.S. crops could push crop prices beyond current near-record levels, they said.

Jeff Ryan, a corn and soybean farmer in Cresco, Iowa, said under 10% of his crop is planted and more rain Monday night delayed his progress. In a



Some corn-producing states such as Illinois have seen above-average precipitation recently.

typical year, he said, he finishes planting by May 10, but windy and overcast weather conditions this spring have left his soil too wet. With rain expected later this week, Mr. Ryan said he expects his yields to fall by between 10% and 20% if the weather doesn't improve.

"It's not looking real promising," Mr. Ryan said, adding it will take him about 10 days to plant. "It all depends on the weather. If it's just rainy enough and overcast, there's not much you can do."

Corn crops usually produce less grain when planted in middle to late May, said Jeffrey Coulter, a University of Minnesota Extension corn agronomist, who advises regional farmers. When corn is planted after May 12, yields start to slip, but can stay high until around May 20, he said.

Some corn-producing states—such as Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota and North Dakota—have seen above-average

precipitation over the past three months, according to data from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Wet soils in Corn Belt states prevented farmers from getting their machinery into their fields.

22%

Percentage of U.S. corn crop planted as of Monday

Sean Elliot, a sixth-generation farmer in Iroquois County, Ill., planted his crop until midnight on Monday and got back out to the fields at 5:30 a.m. the next day to resume planting. Some of his land is still wet, but with more rain expected this weekend, Mr. Elliot said he is racing to get as much corn and soybean

planted as he can this week. He has a drainage system installed that will help dry out his soil, but his neighbors that don't will probably lose out on some of their yields, he said. "We're pushing as hard as we can," he said.

Farmers faced a similar situation in 2019, when record rainfall delayed planting and many either planted diminished crops or made insurance claims for unplanted acres. Corn production declined by about 5% that year, according to the USDA.

Further west, drought conditions are lingering in parts of major grain-producing states like Kansas and Nebraska, where dry soils make it difficult for farmers to successfully plant seeds.

Over 68% of the winter-wheat crop in the U.S. is in a severe drought, while spring-wheat states are stuck with excessive moisture, said Chandler Goule, chief execu-

HEARD ON THE STREET

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

Twitter Deal No Sure Thing

Musk, the world's richest person on paper, has been known to change his mind

This looks like a hole you could drive a Cybertruck through, but Wall Street is rightfully wary.

Elon Musk's agreement to buy **Twitter** for \$54.20 a share is leaving a lot of money on the table for anybody willing to ride his coat-tails. The social-media company's shares are currently about 15% below the agreed-upon price. Assuming the deal closes in late October, the annualized return of owning the shares between now and then comes to about 33%. That is the sort of merger arbitrage spread one typically sees when there are serious antitrust concerns or if an uncertain shareholder vote will determine a deal's fate.

None of those apply here, and the deal is for a fixed amount of cash, not shares. Additionally, Mr. Musk is a U.S. citizen, making a review on national security grounds unlikely. Before trying their luck, though, amateur arbitrageurs should both consider with whom they are dealing and read the fine print.

The merger agreement contains a reverse termination fee of \$1 billion should Mr. Musk fail to consummate the deal. Such penalties are hardly get-out-of-jail-free cards, especially since a buyer can't just walk away for no reason. In this case, though, he effectively can: Buried at the end of the agreement is the language about Twitter's le-

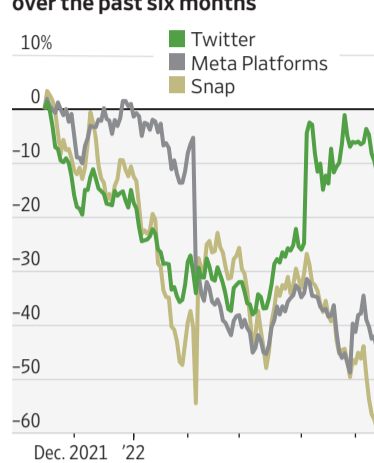
gal remedies. Incredibly, the potential damages are capped at the level of the reverse termination fee.

As a veteran special situations hedge-fund manager points out, \$1 billion isn't an awful lot at just 2.5% of Twitter's value. Rival social-media company **Meta Platforms'** shares are down by 41% so far this year, **Snap Inc.** is down by more than half and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index is off by 25%. During a time of risk aversion in markets such as today, the market might leave a wide merger arbitrage spread even if the buyer's name was Blackstone, explains the manager.

And this buyer's name is Musk. The world's richest person on paper has been known to change his mind before, or worse. He mused about taking **Tesla** private, even going so far as to proclaim "funding secured" to his Twitter followers, resulting in securities fraud charges and a penalty. He also once promised to set up a challenger to Warren Buffett's **See's Candies**, only to back down after failing to find something he felt was superior.

And while \$1 billion is a lot of money, even for the world's richest man, it is his money. There isn't so much as a pushover board to argue with him. If one assumes that at least half of 1% of Mr. Musk's esti-

Share-price performance over the past six months



Source: FactSet

mated \$240 billion net worth is tied to his irreverent image, then that exceeds the potential damages. Thumbing his nose at Wall Street is part of his identity, including crudely mocking the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Mr. Musk also could realize that "fixing" Twitter will be hard. Issues around content management are complex and weighty, and it already seems to be dawning on him, based on his public remarks, that the issue is more complicated than just a simple call for more free speech.

Offsetting those risks is the fact that Twitter seems to have become a bit of a hero's quest, both for Mr. Musk and many of his 92 million followers on the platform. That following has given multibillionaire businessman the pull of a major celebrity—something he clearly values. And note that his decision to buy Twitter came just weeks after he publicly claimed to be giving "serious thought" to building his own social-media platform—a tall task for even a popular figure with a wide following.

The question isn't merely "will he or won't he," though. There also is the risk that Mr. Musk tries to strike a better deal. That thesis was put forward this week by Hindenburg Research, an activist short seller betting that Twitter shares will fall. Mr. Musk responded to the suggestion on—where else—Twitter with what wasn't quite a rebuttal: "Interesting. Don't forget to look on the bright side of life sometimes!"

Merger arbitrage professionals, who often borrow heavily to earn money on deal spreads, wouldn't be feeling cheerful at all if a sure payday were sabotaged by the world's quirkiest billionaire. For better or worse, this opportunity is for the amateurs.

—Spencer Jakab and Dan Gallagher

Inflation Has a Ways To Fall to Ease Pain

Inflation might have peaked, but that isn't the same thing as saying that it is under control.

The Labor Department reported Wednesday that consumer prices rose a seasonally adjusted 0.3% in April from a month earlier, putting them 8.3% above their year-earlier level. In March, they were up 8.5% on the year. Core prices, which exclude often-volatile prices for food and energy items in an effort to better reflect inflation's underlying trend, rose 0.6% from March and were up 6.2% from a year earlier in April. That compared with a 6.5% on-year gain in March. Even though inflation eased a bit on a year-over-year basis, the monthly gain in core prices in particular was bigger than economists expected to see.

Still, a month's inflation reading, good or bad, should usually be taken with a larger grain of salt than many investors are apt to. Some of the big drivers of the April gain in core prices, such as airfares and new-vehicle prices, can cut an erratic path from month to month. Moreover, inflation in many of the items caught up in supply-chain snarls has clearly begun to fade. Core goods prices were up 9.7% from a year in April—a lot, but in February they were up by 12.4%.

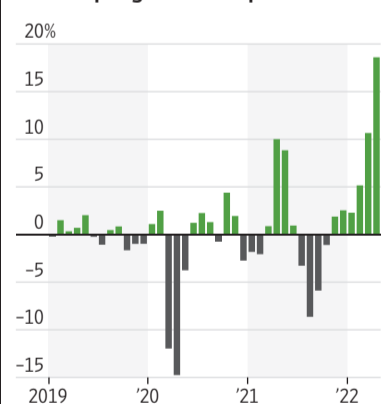
What matters most might not be whether inflation eases in the months ahead, but by how much.

The Federal Reserve's aim is to get inflation to 2%, and even though its preferred measure tends to run cooler than the Labor Department's, that is a long way off. Moreover, while the tightening campaign it started this year has had an obvious effect on the stock market, outside of housing it has yet to show much apparent effect on the real economy: Consumer demand remains robust, and the job market is strong. No matter what, it seems likely that the central bank will be raising interest rates through the course of this year, and on into the next.

What a little relief on inflation would do is make investors think that the Fed's endpoint interest rates might be a little lower than what they expect now, rather than a little higher. Until that happens, the stock market could be a treacherous place.

—Justin Lahart

Monthly change in consumer airfare prices, which was one of big drivers of the April gain in core prices



Note: Seasonally adjusted
Source: Labor Department via St. Louis Fed

Kohl's Win Is Only the Beginning

More daunting tasks remain ahead despite winning the proxy fight with Macellum Advisors

A bitter campaign and a poison pill later, **Kohl's** has emerged the victor in the proxy fight against an activist investor. But that is only the beginning for the department-store chain.

On Wednesday, Kohl's shareholders rejected activist investor Macellum Advisors' push to replace up to 10 directors. Macellum had renewed its push for changes at Kohl's starting in January, including for a sale process, which Kohl's subsequently hired Goldman Sachs to run. The department-store chain has said on its website that it engaged with more than 20 interested parties.

That Kohl's was able to stand its ground is already a strong vote of confidence. Other retailers have been unable to fend off challenges to their board this year: **Dollar Tree** and **Bed Bath & Beyond** settled with their respective activist investors in March, with both companies adding activist-nominated board members.

Despite seemingly healthy appetite in the private-equity market (Twitter and Citrix Systems are recent examples), the market seems skeptical that a deal will occur for Kohl's. After the proxy-vote results were announced, Kohl's share price sank 3% and is now below \$50 a share, around its level before Macellum Advisors renewed its campaign. Kohl's shares went as high



Macellum had renewed its push for changes at Kohl's starting in January.

as \$63.71 after news reports emerged late January of a bid by a consortium backed by Starboard Value.

This all means that Kohl's has a tough climb ahead to take its valuation back to historic levels. Though Kohl's managed to hold on to more business than peers during the pandemic, the latest quarter

was unflattering compared with peers. Both **Macy's** and **Nordstrom**, for example, saw an increase in revenue in their last reported quarter (ended January) compared with two years earlier. Kohl's saw a 5% decline. The weakness, though, was in large part driven by supply-chain and inventory issues. Those had hampered

deliveries of private-label products, which saw higher demand than Kohl's planned for. The company had indicated that inventory constraints hurt sales by 400 basis points, or hundredths of a percentage point, in its last reported quarter. An inflation-squeezed consumer base should be a good thing for Kohl's in coming quarters, given that it sells at cheaper price points than department-store peers.

Importantly, Kohl's Chief Executive Officer Michelle Gass has been more experimental than most and seems to have a good pulse on shopper preferences. Its plan to introduce coveted Sephora shops inside its stores seems to be bearing fruit, for example. The company plans to grow the Sephora business to \$2 billion by 2025, which would represent roughly 10% of Kohl's expected revenue that year. It is also planning to open 100 new smaller-format stores in the next four years, a concept that has shown promise on pilot runs. Wall Street analysts seem to trust Kohl's strategic direction. Even before news of a potential bid emerged in January, most analysts polled by FactSet gave Kohl's a target price above \$64 a share.

Still, with competitors looking healthier lately, Kohl's management has no time to rest on its laurels.

—Jinjo lee

Philip Morris Offers to Pay a Premium to Re-Enter U.S.

Fourteen years after it was spun out from Altria, **Philip Morris International** wants to get back into the U.S. market—this time with a smoke-free business.

The tobacco giant, which distributes Marlboro cigarettes outside America, has made a \$16 billion all-cash offer for **Swedish Match**, a Stockholm-based company that makes Zyn oral nicotine pouches. The price is at a 39% premium to where the target's shares were trading before the WSJ reported Monday that the two companies were in merger talks.

A deal would give PMI an extra \$2 billion in annual sales and increase its share of net revenue from noncombustible products like heated tobacco sticks and oral nicotine pouches from 29% in 2021 to around 36% in 2022 based on FactSet estimates. Management wants to grow this share above 50% by the middle of the decade and already has spent \$9 billion developing its own smokeless products internally. This shift could make the stock more appealing to investors wary of tobacco names that rely

heavily on sales of combustible cigarettes.

Including Swedish Match's net debt and dividend payment, PMI will pay an all-in price of \$17.5 billion, a multiple of 18.4 times the target's estimated earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization for 2022, or around 17 times estimates for 2023, according to analyst consensus compiled by FactSet. This is steep based on major deals in the tobacco industry over the past two decades. In 2017, British American Tobacco paid 11.7 times for Reynolds American, Bernstein notes.

It is especially pricey considering PMI wants only part of the business. Swedish Match makes roughly 75% of its Ebitda from smoke-free products and the rest from cigars and lighters. Even putting the cigar and lighters business on the same multiple as the Reynolds American deal—generous considering its cigar brands face tighter regulations in the U.S.—means the smoke-free business is valued above 20 times.

True, this part of Swedish



The tobacco giant offered \$16 billion for nicotine oral pouch maker Swedish Match.

Match's business is growing quickly, increasing sales by 16% in the first quarter of 2022 compared with the year-ago period. And there is an opportunity to launch Zyn in new markets, especially in certain European countries where the brand has more limited distribution than in the U.S.

More critical for PMI is a foot-

print in the U.S.—the most valuable smoke-free tobacco market in the world and currently dominated by rivals BAT and e-cigarette brand Juul Labs, which is part-owned by Altria. A purchase of Swedish Match would make PMI the number one player in trendy oral nicotine pouches, with a 64% share of the American market

ahead of the 18% and 11% shares of Altria and BAT, respectively.

PMI would get two factories in America, one in Kentucky and one in Alabama, and a distribution network connected to 150,000 points of sale such as convenience stores and gasoline stations. This infrastructure will be valuable as PMI launches its own vaping and heated tobacco products in the U.S. market in the coming years. Altria has a license to distribute IQOS in the U.S., but the offer for Swedish Match is a sign PMI wants to get out of this contract and go it alone. Altria's stock is down almost a 10th since news of the merger talks emerged.

The likelihood of a counterbid, from another major tobacco player looks low. BAT and Altria would face antitrust issues, while Japan Tobacco might be too distracted by its exposure to Russia to consider an expensive deal. Analysts at Cowen's event-driven team note the target's share price puts the odds of completion of the offer around 93%. Swedish Match and PMI look like a well-suited match.

—Carol Ryan

THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING

A LOOK AHEAD FROM THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

INSPIRATION:

Six ways to spark it when you're stuck **R2**



RINGING IN A NEW NORMAL

As questions swirl about the next phase in a turbulent time, executives, designers and thinkers featured at **The Future of Everything Festival**, happening May 17-19, discuss what they see coming

The Race to Fill Instant Needs

Gopuff's co-CEO runs down the best strategies—and the speed bumps **R2**

You Can't Digitize Dessert

Milk Bar's chief executive on why sweets will last and how they connect people **R3**

Long Game: The Athlete As Creator

LeBron James's business partner, the CEO of SpringHill Co., talks stories **R4**

Heading for A Heads-Up World?

Magic Leap's CEO previews the impact augmented reality could have **R6**

Fashion's Outlook for 2030

Diane von Furstenberg on a changing zeitgeist and the metaverse **R8**

New Ways To Work And Invest

The global CEO of online bank Monzo sees innovation for employees, customers **R9**

THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING | THE FESTIVAL ISSUE



to have more full- and part-time workers, or do you think you will retain gig workers?

We have a [full-time] workforce on the driver side in some of our markets in Europe, and we tested what that looks like. What I'll tell you is that we have a really unique use case with our driver partners here in the U.S., where if a driver partner wants to be a full-time employee, they can. They can apply to work at any one of the MFCs that they're delivering from and become a full-time employee there.

But what is practically happening is most of the drivers are electing not to do that because they want to have that flexibility from a workplace perspective. What sets us apart really from everyone else is there is a standard to your workday, where you're coming back to the same MFC every time, and you're dealing with Gopuff employees every single day and not, you know, an angry or frustrated restaurant worker. And you can deliver a lot more on a per-hour basis than you can anywhere else, because they have a central pickup point. So you need a lot less drivers to do a lot more deliveries.

◀ Rafael Ilishayev co-founded Gopuff in 2013; the company now delivers in more than 1,000 cities world-wide.

Let's talk about the future of real estate. You have these micro-fulfillment centers, which are in urban areas. In placing them, to what extent are you able to buy up, or rent up, what used to be retail or even office space, as the nature of cities changes?

So we need certain requirements, obviously, to make an MFC work. It needs to be on the ground level and it needs to be a certain square footage, and it needs to have a certain amount of loading. We're also testing different models of what customers want. Like in California because we bought BevMo, and in Kentucky with Liquor Barn, we have pickup options where folks can not just get things delivered, but come into kind of a retail storefront.

The former-use case of the spaces differs a lot. You get your former drugstores, former gyms, former ground-floor office space, it's across the gamut.

We've got to make sure that we comply from a zoning perspective because of all the different categories that we interact in. We built a lot of software ahead of time to really make sure that when we're looking at a space we're not wasting any time, and it meets all our requirements.

On the customer side, how is the changing nature of work and where work is done—the rise of remote work, work-from-home and the like—having an impact on your business?

For sure it definitely increased the frequency of use of Gopuff. What it really did affect, though, was our real-estate strategy.

A lot of people who lived in urban environments moved to suburban environments. We call it "urban-adjacencies." They're suburbs that are immediately outside of a big city. We saw a massive move into these urban-adjacent markets, and frankly places where we didn't have really great coverage. So we made it a pretty big race to make sure that we could still serve that customer. It was a massive, massive effort for our real-estate construction and launches. It seemed like moving at light speed to really make sure that we can launch those urban-adjacent markets and suburban markets.

Interview has been condensed and edited.

GOPUFF'S CO-CEO ON THE RACE TO DELIVER

Drones? E-Bikes? Robots? Rafael Ilishayev weighs in on what will work—and what won't—to fill 'instant needs' **By Christopher Mims**

Rafael Ilishayev is co-CEO of Gopuff, the "instant needs" company he co-founded in Philadelphia in 2013. Today the company delivers a variety of goods—from snacks and toiletries to meals and alcohol—in 30 minutes or less in more than 1,000 cities world-wide. Gopuff has raised \$1.5 billion and is valued at \$15 billion.

The company operates its own warehouses and owns its inventory, making it unusual in the ultra-competitive quick-delivery market, which includes a number of startups—some of which recently failed. Most of its competitors, like Uber Eats and Instacart, don't own their inventory and act as "asset lite" intermediaries between merchants and customers.

As a result of Gopuff's business model and relatively long tenure in fast delivery, Mr. Ilishayev has an unusual viewpoint on what works and what's economical among the emerging technologies powering the present and future of delivery. He spoke with The Wall Street Journal about what he sees.

I'm going to name four emerging technologies, and you tell me if you think any of them are going to have an impact on your bottom line in the next 10 years or not: drone delivery, autonomous vehicles, e-bikes, robotic micro-fulfillment centers in urban areas.

So the good thing is a lot of what you mentioned, we're kind of in the scoping phase. We've looked at all four of those things. The e-bike side is something that we're doing in New York today and something that we continue to roll out in London and Paris, and it's something that doesn't work everywhere. Density needs to make sense for e-bikes work, and weather is an important factor as well.

I think drone delivery specifically is going to be really tough in

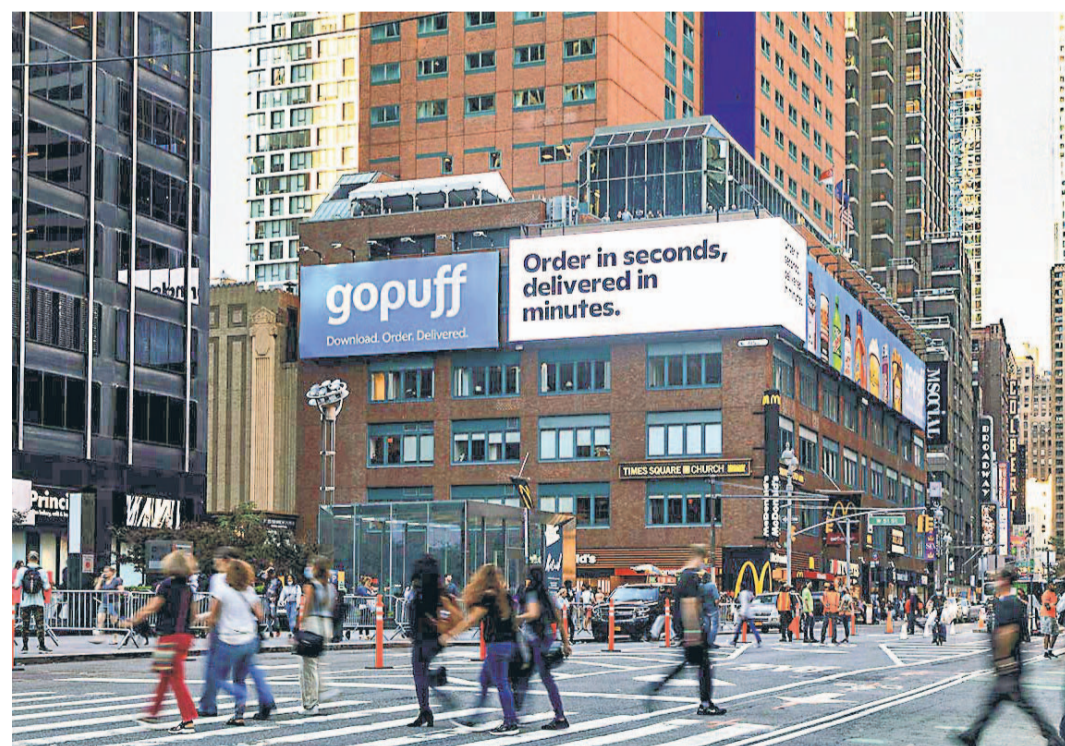
an urban environment. It's going to be a lot easier in a suburban environment. We're a lot more years away from being able to really commercialize drone delivery in a massive way than we are with autonomous-vehicle delivery, where there's a whole host of companies that are doing it today. We've looked at pretty much all of them, and determined that this is like a mid-term range, versus drones being more long-term.

On robotics inside of facilities,

'I think drone delivery specifically is going to be really tough in an urban environment.'

we see kind of mixed results there. The problem is our MFCs [micro-fulfillment centers] are not hundreds of thousands of square feet. On the other hand, robotics inside our bigger distribution centers, from where we allocate out to the micro-fulfillment centers, is a no-brainer. This is something that we will continue to invest in.

Let's talk about the delivery side and the gig-economy side. Do you think that eventually you're going



LOOKING FORWARD

Ways to Spark Inspiration

Executives and founders told us what they do to get ideas flowing.



Listen to Workers Out in The Field

Rafael Ilishayev, co-founder and co-CEO of Gopuff delivery company

"We firmly believe that the person who's best suited to fix a packing problem, or a routing problem, is the person who's interacting with that problem day in and day out. The product managers and engineers are great too. But identifying and finding inspiration for solving that problem usually comes from our field workforce. Day in and day out, they're what pushes the business forward."

THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING | THE FESTIVAL ISSUE



DESSERT WILL STILL MATTER IN 2050

‘You can’t really digitize that stuff,’ says Milk Bar CEO Christina Tosi, who sees sweets as a great connector **By Katherine Finnerty**

You may know Milk Bar for its triple-decker birthday cakes or its bite-size “cake truffles.” The woman behind the sweets is Christina Tosi, an award-winning pastry chef and dessert evangelist who has re-engineered traditional confections, taking the icing off the sides of cakes and introducing “Cereal Milk,” a beverage created by flavoring milk with breakfast cereal.

Ms. Tosi, the chief executive of Milk Bar, started the bakery and dessert restaurant chain in 2008 as an offshoot of David Chang’s Momofuku Noodle Bar in New York. It is now a privately held company and a national brand with a dozen locations in the U.S. and Canada, a thriving e-commerce business and plans for its products to be in more than 5,500 grocery stores by year-end.

Ms. Tosi’s profile is growing as well. After appearing on the Netflix series “Chef’s Table” in 2018, she now hosts her own series on the streaming platform, “Bake Squad.” She started a weekly Instagram Live called “Bake Club” during peak pandemic quarantine. She’s written cookbooks, a children’s book and in March released a memoir called “Desert Can Save the World.”

She spoke with The Wall Street Journal about what’s next.

Your new book—part cookbook, part memoir, part self-help and inspiration resource—is called “Desert Can Save the World.” That’s a pretty bold claim.

I don’t actually think dessert can save the world, but I think dessert can do a lot of things. I’m a pastry chef. So I very deeply know dessert’s superpowers. It connects us to ourselves, to one another, to strangers, to the world. I know the

▲ Christina Tosi, chief executive of the bakery and dessert restaurant chain, is working to expand the brand.



► Ms. Tosi leads a tasting with her employees at the company’s kitchen in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

bridges it forms. Even when we disagree on other things, dessert has a powerful way for us to find something in common.

Milk Bar was a little bakery in the East Village and now it’s this huge dessert brand. How has that expansion impacted your approach to recipe creation?

Our seven-year-old goal is to feed every single person in this world a cookie. Our growth and strategy and approach has been, how can we do that? Where are our people? How do we meet them? How do we get a cookie in their hands?

So this has always been the plan?

Because of our collective reality over the last two or three years, we think about making recipes in two different ways. One is the way that we always have, which is to say that we are always trying to figure out how to tap into people’s dessert memories.

The other side of it is developing recipes that people can make on their own at home, which is something that I started doing with Bake Club in the middle of the pandemic, and still do every Monday. Because we have found that feeding every single person a cookie doesn’t even have to be us baking the cookie. It can also be us giving people cause to bake a cookie with us.

Where do you see the dessert world in 2050?

The reality of food, specifically dessert, is that you can’t really digitize that stuff. We need food to survive, but dessert is inherently not an imperative part of our survival. It is a choice that we make because it moves us and it engages our senses, right?

That gets me excited about being a pastry chef, because it means that making a great dessert will still be very much a powerful thing

that we look forward to. Visually I hope desserts continue to be more magnificent—that a fluffy cake is super fluffy and a dense and fudgy brownie is unbelievably dense and fudgy. And that we figure out how to make desserts taste amazing regardless of the allergies that people have.

We’re seeing all kinds of substitutes—and I worry this is sacrilege for me to say to you—but what do you think of sugar substitutes?

I have a totally open mind about it. I don’t love anything that’s on the market right now. The way that it lands on my tastebuds is cloying in a way that takes the joy away, but I also don’t have health or allergen problems in the way that others do, and they do create the ability for people to enjoy. I am a pastry chef, but I am also a mad scientist in my brain where I’m always looking at ingredients or things that grow in the earth to go, “Ooh, what about this? What about that?”

Where do you go to get inspiration?

One that I just did this morning over a cup of coffee, I go and look at old cookbooks. We talk about 2050—but what were we eating and doing 50 years ago? What were our parents, what were our ancestors making? What was their version of nostalgia? What was their comfort food?

Do you have a favorite? Or one that sticks out recently?

“The Joy of Cooking” is probably my go-to because it’s like an encyclopedia of nostalgic food and flavors, but I was reading the Ferrington House Cookbook this morning.

What do you wanna be when you grow up, Christina?

I want someone to let me be in charge of Mondelēz [International] or Hershey or Mars or General Mills. Like, can I be in charge of all the cereal and the break-and-bake dough? Can I be in charge of every flavor of Oreo? Can I be in charge of McCormick where I can tell you all the extracts that we need to have in our homes? Can I be in charge of all the Betty Crocker baking mixes?

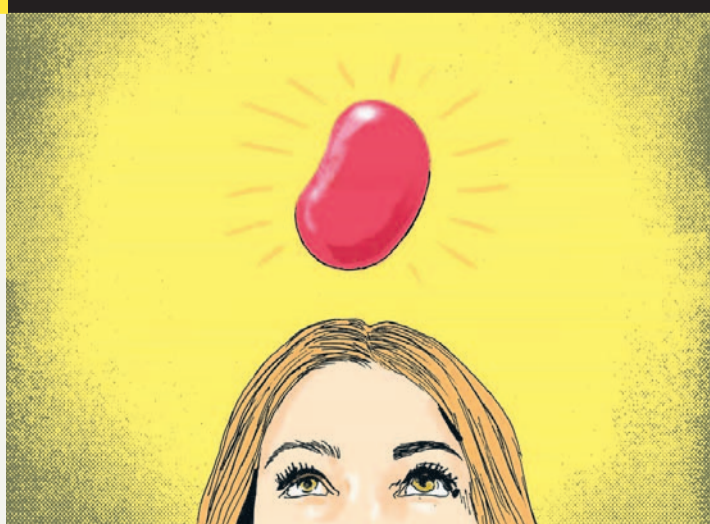
Interview has been condensed and edited.



Tap Into Emotional Signposts

Milk Bar CEO Christina Tosi on a go-to trick for sparking inspiration

“One is asking people what their dirty dessert secret is, which is like the dessert that you eat when no one’s around. Or there are such things as dirty dessert secrets that you share with others. Like my older sister and I. If I bring a plastic white bag full of Very Cherry Jelly Beans—we used to do this as teenagers at the local mall—that’s our dirty dessert secret. They are these brilliant emotional signposts.”



THE FUTURE OF EVERYTHING | THE FESTIVAL ISSUE



had always been around, obviously, but the athlete had never been treated as a creator. We thought athletes had always been treated as their human-interest stories but never as truly interesting humans.

What do you make of the streaming wars and SpringHill's place in them? They're real and they're serious, but it just proves once again that no matter what the technology is, from the days of the radio all the way up until now, storytelling is the most important. So that's ultimately what this is about: who can tell the best stories.

Our movie "House Party" comes out on HBO Max this summer. Our director, Calmatic, this is the first feature film he's ever done. But our thesis that creators like Calmatic, who made a bunch of music videos and commercials [winning a Grammy for his music video of the Lil Nas X hit "Old Town Road"]

needed to feel empowered and part of the process, that's how you get amazing content that's different from what's out there.

What will your job look like in 2030?

I root for technology. I root for the world to change because no matter where it goes, as the world ebbs and flows, from the days of the campfires all the way to Web3 and everything in between, you need storytelling. The idea of telling amazing stories and empowering talent and creators—I think that will be my job until I retire.

Recently "The Shop" moved from HBO to YouTube. Why?

We felt HBO had been a great partner, but for our business model, what we want to do that's better for us is just do it ourselves and put it in a place that the world can see.

We don't just look at "The Shop" as a show. We look at "The Shop" much more in the way Disney would: "The Shop" as a brand. It's much better for the brand to be in a place where a global audience can see it.

Do you see any generational differences with young creators today?

I think that the younger generation of talent and creators understand that with the speed the world moves at, you have to turn things pretty quickly.

What did the pandemic change in your business? What became more valuable and less valuable?

I think it once again proved that ours is a people business. It made good people—not good in the sense that they're talented, but just good people—extremely valuable. That's what you need as a company. If you're not going to be together in the same office, you really need people who are willing to collaborate and work together and have a good healthy discourse to get to amazing ideas.

Our company is around 210 people. It's exactly 50/50 men and women, and it's 65% people of color. The truth is that people think of diversity as race and gender, but we've built a company that's diverse in all forms. My grandmother had a line: If two people always agree, one person isn't needed.

Interview has been condensed and edited.

LETTING THE PLAYER TAKE CENTER STAGE

Maverick Carter, CEO of SpringHill Co., the entertainment firm behind 'The Shop,' builds a business on empowering talent **By Ben Cohen**

One of the most important days in the modern NBA happened on a day when no basketball was played.

This sport where so much of the action now takes place off the court fundamentally changed on July 8, 2010, when LeBron James announced in an ESPN special called "The Decision" that he was taking his talents to the Miami Heat. It was a radical act for the best player in the game to build a superteam with other stars in hopes of winning a championship, and the cold way he jilted his hometown Cleveland Cavaliers live on national television made Mr. James the biggest villain in sports.

But over time, viewed from the perspective of the future, that night looks very different. It marked a new era in professional sports in which athletes have leveraged their value to seize greater control of their careers. That idea of athlete empowerment is what Maverick Carter, Mr. James's business partner and one of the architects of "The Decision," says he is taking to talent beyond sports.

"We live and die by that," says Mr. Carter, the CEO of SpringHill Co., the entertainment firm he co-founded with Mr. James, his childhood friend. "That's the mission of our company."

That company was valued at \$725 million last year, when SpringHill sold a minority stake to a group of investors that included Nike, "Fortnite" creator Epic Games and Fenway Sports Group, which owns the Boston Red Sox and Liverpool FC. The plan was to use the funding to produce new shows and license existing properties in foreign countries, a business

that has proven lucrative since Mr. Carter and Mr. James merged their production company, digital-media firm and marketing efforts into SpringHill in 2020.

This move coincided with the proliferation of streaming platforms and increased demand for content. SpringHill was there to provide. Among its buzziest programming, which includes shows on Netflix, Disney+, HBO, Hulu and traditional film studios and television networks, is talk show "The Shop," which has hosted huge names in sports and culture. (Another high-profile SpringHill project, the 2021 movie "Space Jam: A New Legacy," starring Mr. James, was smashed by critics but a success at the box office.)

Mr. Carter is betting that giving talent freedom and resources will



'So that's ultimately what this is about: who can tell the best stories.'

cultivate a generation of younger creators. He spoke to The Wall Street Journal about the future of the entertainment industry and athlete-driven projects.

When it comes to sports, SpringHill focuses on what happens away from the actual games. What opportunity did you see in that business?

We felt like the idea of storytelling

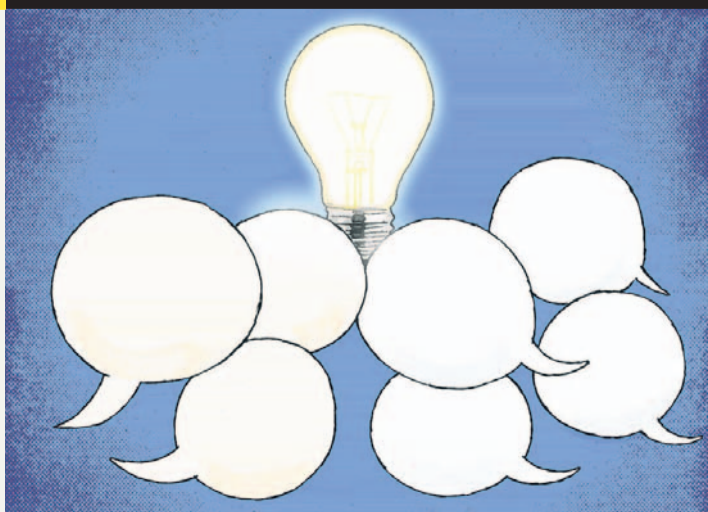
► Mr. Carter, top left, on the set of 'The Shop,' next to Paul Rivera of SpringHill and guests (from left) Naomi Osaka, Kevin Love, Jadakiss and Wanda Sykes.



Connect With People

Maverick Carter, CEO of SpringHill Co. entertainment firm, on what he does to get ideas going.

"If I feel stuck or need to spark inspiration, there are a few people I call to meet up with. That's my only way to really spark inspiration is to connect with people—smart people who are looking at the world and studying the world and have traveled the world that I can talk to and have a conversation. Who knows where it does or doesn't go?"





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SEEING A NEW (AUGMENTED) REALITY

Peggy Johnson, CEO of AR goggle maker Magic Leap, talks about the real metaverse and using the tech on the job **By Joanna Stern**

tween AR and mobile phones. When they first came out, they were big and they got smaller over time. A lot of that was component reduction and silicon integration. So those two things have to happen. It'll be a few years before we can get to an eye-glasses format. But clearly, that'll open up a consumer market in a big way and that's definitely what we're focused on.

Speaking of consumers, what will be the killer app that gets us all wanting to put these types of devices on our faces?

◀ Magic Leap CEO Peggy Johnson at the company's headquarters in Plantation, Fla.

Enterprise customers were really the first users of mobile phones. I was in that industry back then, and they wanted longer battery life, smaller, lighter, all of those things. So we'll

take all that feedback in and use it as we begin to design Magic Leap 3.

I do think—and particularly because we're coming out of a pandemic and we're living in a hybrid world—this idea of 3-D collaboration with others who may be in the room or maybe a continent away is going to be an application that drives consumer use. It could be talking to your grandma on the other coast or it could be talking to your co-workers. To make meetings come to life seems to be the thing that will really drive usage into a consumer format.

We're hearing a lot about the promise of the metaverse. What's your outlook on it all?

There are great use cases for virtual reality. A lot of them are around entertainment, training, that sort of thing. It's somewhat limited because when you're fully occluded, you're limited and you can't move around as easily.

When you can see your physical world and interact with the digital content, that's the true promise of the metaverse. The technology should just blend in. I think the pandemic will push us more toward that because we have been heads-down for two years and on these little screens.

It's 2030. What do your job and industry look like?

Maybe I don't come to work. Maybe I put on my glasses and have meetings. We're all sort of doing that now since the pandemic but the experience would just be a lot more natural, as if I'm actually in the room with people. The technology is headed there.

Hopefully that is the world we'll be in in 2030 and we will be back to a heads-up world and not looking down at a little screen in our hands. Our hands will be free to interact with that digital content in our physical world.

—Cordilia James
contributed to this article.

Interview has been condensed and edited.

Metaverse. Metaverse. Metaverse.

Say it three times fast, and you'll still be confused about the promise of this much-hyped digital world where we'll apparently work, hang out and more.

Yet Peggy Johnson, chief executive of Magic Leap, can see it clearly. She doesn't even have to put on the company's high-tech headset.

Ms. Johnson, who took over the reins of the embattled startup in 2020, sees a future where we put on augmented-reality glasses and view digital information projected within our real world. No more would we be constantly sucked out of the world to stare at a screen in our hand or on our desk or wall.

(Reminder: While a virtual-reality headset blocks out the world so you can escape, augmented-reality goggles add a layer onto it. Think of the windshield heads-up display found in many cars today.)

After 25 years at Qualcomm Inc. and then six more at Microsoft Corp. as its chief deal maker, the 60-year-old CEO redirected Magic Leap to focus on enterprise customers and business-use customers for its still nascent technology. The Magic Leap 2 headset, expected to ship later this year, is designed to be lighter than its predecessor, with better optics and audio.

The Wall Street Journal spoke to Ms. Johnson about the industries already making AR a reality and what it will take to get glasses that don't look like a total nerd helmet.

Our lives are dominated by screens. Why do we need augmented-reality glasses?

Right now, we sit in a stationary spot, and we interact through a keyboard with a PC. Augmented reality is going to change that whole paradigm. You'll

be able to look at your physical world and interact with digital content that sits in your physical world. The opportunity is to have a heads-up view and be able to have useful tools embedded in your physical world that will help you get your job done. It'll help you do things in shorter amounts of time because you'll have these digital cues helping you.

Magic Leap headsets are already being used on the job. What industries are benefiting from AR?

We have a number of healthcare companies using it because it very precisely and accurately can place digital content in front of their eyes.

For instance, we have a company named Brainlab who's using it. They scan an image of your brain, and a 3-D image of your brain is now in front of your eyes and it can be used as a pre-surgical planning tool. You can draw the surgical pathway that you want to take.

Another company called SentiAR creates live, interactive 3-D visuals of patient's hearts during cardiac-ablation procedures, which are performed to correct heart-rhythm problems. Typically, that's done with a surgeon feeding the tube in but looking at a 2-D screen. Now, they have the ability to map your heart—the actual live heart—in front of your eyes while they're inserting the catheter, and that just improves accuracy, navigation abilities.

Beyond that, we have a variety of manufacturing scenarios. We think it's going to be a real tool for the factory worker. You can almost

Hopefully in 2030, 'we will be back to a heads-up world and not looking down at a little screen in our hands.'

think of it as a computer on their eyes. Their hands are still free to do their job but, for instance, the worker can walk up to a physical machine. Above it can be displayed digitally the statistics of the machine: The up time, the down time, there can be a red flag that says it's time for maintenance.

With Magic Leap 2, you've made hardware improvements but it still requires you to wear a headset that's attached to a mini-computer on your waist. What are the biggest roadblocks to getting to sleek-looking glasses?

To some degree, we think of this as an advantage. We've taken the heat and the weight and put it down on your waistband or your pocket. That has allowed us to make the headset only about 250 grams, about 20% lighter than our Magic Leap 1.

You can draw an analogy be-

▶ Magic Leap glasses were used to demonstrate Harley-Davidson's LiveWire electric motorcycle at CES in 2019.



Get Out For a Morning Run

Magic Leap CEO Peggy Johnson on her formula for getting thoughts moving

"I like to run. I'm not a fast runner—you can very publicly look up all my marathon times! But it does give me time to think, to plan out my day. If I have a challenging meeting ahead, that is my time. And it's like, I have to do it. I was out there this morning on the boardwalk and I'm out almost every day because it's the time that I get to innovate, think and let my mind free up. That's my thing." ▶▶



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THE **POWER** PLAYBOOK

U.S. OFFSHORE WIND MARKET SET TO SOAR

AFTER YEARS OF LAGGING BEHIND OTHER COUNTRIES, **THE U.S. IS POISED TO BECOME A MAJOR POWER IN THE SECTOR**, BENEFITING FROM LESSONS LEARNED IN EUROPE

In just a couple of decades, wind power has gone from niche technology to mainstay of energy systems around the world. Once seen as complex and expensive, offshore wind's costs have fallen rapidly as developers and financiers have grown accustomed to the particularities of the sector, and technological advances have enabled larger, more efficient turbines.

Iberdrola, which opened its first offshore wind farm in the Irish Sea in 2014, has built an operational portfolio of 1.26 gigawatts (GW) and expects an additional 7.2 GW by 2027. Offshore wind was pioneered and nurtured in Europe's North Sea basin—still one of the biggest markets—helped by supportive regulation and shallow waters that make it relatively easy to fix turbines to the seabed.

One key offshore wind market that has been conspicuously underdeveloped is the U.S.—but that is about to change. “The U.S. offshore wind market is on the cusp of great things,” says Ben Backwell, CEO of the Global Wind Energy Council.

Bill White, president and CEO, offshore at Avangrid Renewables, part of the Iberdrola Group, agrees. “There is alignment between federal and state governments that offshore wind is an urgent priority, not only for the climate emergency and the urgency of creating more clean energy, but also because of the economic opportunity of creating thousands of new, green jobs.”

One reason offshore wind has been less prominent in the U.S. is the huge success of onshore generation, which has grown strongly in locations from Texas to California, and which until recently was much cheaper than offshore wind power. Having become more affordable in the past decade, offshore wind is set to take off.

“The U.S. is really benefiting from the lessons learned in Europe,” Mr. White adds. “We know this is a technology that works, that is mature, and that is becoming cheaper.”

Avangrid has started work on its first offshore wind project, the 800-megawatt (MW) Vineyard 1 scheme, and is developing 2GW of

capacity spread across the Park City and Commonwealth projects off the coast of Massachusetts.

While these projects will have turbines fixed to the seabed, like almost all current offshore wind farms around the world, much of the U.S.'s offshore wind resource is in areas where the waters are too deep to do that, as they are on much of the West Coast and further out to sea on the East Coast.

That means a new technology, floating wind turbines, will be crucial to the U.S. being able to exploit its offshore wind resources fully. Floating

“The U.S. offshore wind market is on the cusp of great things.”

Ben Backwell, CEO, Global Wind Energy Council

turbines sit on a platform that is tethered to the seabed, rather than the turbines themselves being attached to it. The technology not only opens new areas for exploitation, but it uses few raw materials and could also make manufacture, installation and decommissioning easier and cheaper.

“Floating wind will be essential for some markets,” says Mr. White. “In California, for example, the water reaches extraordinary depths. It wasn't too long ago that floating wind was just an idea, but it has developed very quickly. Iberdrola is now playing a leading role in bringing this technology into commission.”



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FAST FORWARD FOR A FASHION LEGEND

'2030 is now,' says Diane von Furstenberg as she looks at ways to steer her company into the future **By Katharine K. Zarrella**

At 75, Diane von Furstenberg is working on a reinvention of her company. "This is my third-generation rebirth," says Ms. von Furstenberg, who over the past two years brought in 33-year-old Gabby Hirata as president and CEO of her company and hired granddaughter Talita von Furstenberg as co-chairwoman.

The Belgian-born, New York-based designer and entrepreneur launched her business in the early 1970s with the famed wrap dress—a jersey style she created while pregnant that combined comfort, work-appropriate polish and Studio 54-worthy sex appeal. The versatile dress was such a sensation that Ms. von Furstenberg landed on the cover of Newsweek in 1976.

But the frenzy eventually faded and Ms. von Furstenberg, facing bankruptcy, sold off her licenses. She relaunched the brand in 1997, again becoming a global success. In recent years, its relevance waned. The pandemic, she says, afforded her time to step back and rethink her namesake label—and write a book, "Own It: The Secret of Life," published by Phaidon in March 2021.

The designer talked with The Wall Street Journal about the post-lockdown work wardrobe, fashion in the metaverse and taking her company into the future.

In the 1970s, women didn't have many options when it came to workwear that was comfortable and fashionable. Your wrap dress helped change that. Do you think that women have different clothing needs today?

No, they're the same needs. It's always about effortless, sexy, on-the-go and the personality of the woman. I am much more interested in how the woman will feel than the striking dress that's completely uncomfortable.

We're trickling back into the office after two years of working from home in leggings and sweatshirts. What will workwear look like in this new normal?

Everybody wants to be much more casual. A lot of people have stopped wearing high heels. They're wearing Birkenstocks or shoes that, if your mother asked you to wear them [before], you would sue her. And color obviously, because it's very effective. It's about maximum effect, but in a practical way. We design a uniform for women in charge. If you want to be a woman in charge, practical is key.

What does it mean to be a woman

in charge today versus when you started your business?

For me, it's pretty much the same. A woman in charge at the time was independent, able to pay the bills and able to have a man's life in a woman's body. But to be in charge is first and foremost a commitment to ourselves. It's owning who we are. We own our imperfections. We turn them into assets. We own our vulnerability. We turn it into strengths.

In, say, 20 years from now, what will the "woman in charge" uniform look like?

I have no idea. You think when I did the wrap dress I thought that it would still be relevant? No way.

Your wrap dress was included in the 2017 MoMA Exhibition, "Items: Is Fashion Modern?" Can you pinpoint what's made it relevant for so long?

I can't. I know I created the wrap dress, but truly the wrap dress created me. It's thanks to the wrap dress that I became independent, that I became successful, that I was able to pay my bills. So it came out of me, but it has a life on its own. I don't know that I can get—well, obviously I get all the credit—but it's the dress that should get the credit for making me.



In the last two years, you've restructured your business. Were you rethinking your business before Covid or was Covid the catalyst?

I wasn't happy where it was before Covid. I'm always looking ahead. When I [relaunched my brand] 20 years ago or so, I was very much ahead of the game. Then when I tried to grow it, I thought that we were going the old way. So for me, Covid and having to relook at everything was an opportunity.

How will these changes equip your company to move into the future?

▲ Diane von Furstenberg at her desk in her studio above her flagship boutique in Manhattan.

'My 9-year-old grandson would rather buy sneakers for his avatar than real sneakers for himself.'

▲ Diane von Furstenberg, with Andy Warhol and actress Monique van Vooren in New York in 1974, wears a wrap dress of her own design.

I had a lot of options. I could sell, but then if I sell, I sell all my archives. Or I could close. What Gabby did when she came in is put the production and the operation into the hands of my partner [Glamazon] in China. It was very clever in terms of logistics and practicality. But it's still in the working process now.

How do you plan on courting a younger audience while maintaining your longtime customers? Funny enough, every time I start, I get the young ones. It's the young ones who bring the old ones back, not the other way around.

What will the fashion industry and your job—the founder of a legacy business—look like in 2030?

2030 is now, it's tomorrow morning. For me, what I hope is that [my successors] will maintain the spirit and the attitude. Right now I'm putting all of my archive, all of my 50 years of experience, into this huge vault with the codes and the tricks and the knowhow and all of that. Then it's in the hands of young people—my granddaughter, Gabby, whoever else works here—to do it, respecting the values and not trying to be something that we aren't. DVF is about respecting the woman and giving her the tools to be the woman she wants to be.

In your dream world, what will the fashion industry's biggest focus be 10 years from now?

Fashion is not just clothes. Fashion is what you eat, what you use in your house. It's architecture, it's food. Fashion is the zeitgeist of the time, it's not just what you put on you. So what I hope is that we respect nature more and throw away less.

What are you doing to make your company more sustainable?

Well, I try to make clothes that people are not going to throw away. How about that?

What will the next generation of women want out of their clothes?

The world is changing so fast and so much that there's absolutely no way anyone can predict how we will live. [During] Covid, we got much, much closer to the digital world. My 9-year-old grandson would rather buy sneakers for his avatar than real sneakers for himself. AI is already here. I mean, this [smartphone] is my life. I read my books here, I get my information here. I don't need an atlas. I don't need a dictionary. I don't need anything. I connect with everyone. I take pictures. I send pictures. It's all here.

Do you have any desire to hang out in the metaverse? Yeah, sure. Why not?

Could there be a virtual DVF world in our future? Absolutely.

Interview has been condensed and edited.



Take a Walk While You Talk

TS Anil, global CEO of Monzo online bank on what he does to get thoughts flowing

"A thing I love to do is go for a walk with someone. Conversations over a walk are often different than sitting across from someone. So, that's a go-to move: 'Hey, do you feel like going for a quick walk and a coffee?'"



Go to Nature For a Spark

Diane von Furstenberg, fashion designer, entrepreneur and author, on her sources of inspiration

"I'm very curious. I have a very good relationship with myself. I read a lot. Right now, at my age, I'm reading a book on how to train and design my brain ['Designing the Mind: The Principles of Psychitecture' by Ryan A. Bush]. But the two things that inspire me the most are nature and women."

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RESHAPING
WORK, MONEY

Shifts in benefits, investing are here to stay, says the global CEO of Monzo Bank **By Chip Cutter**

If the pandemic changed the way people view their jobs, it may have also ushered in a new challenge for managers: how to keep reshaping work for years to come.

The desire for flexibility and a rethinking of workers' relationships with their employers are likely to remain well into the future, putting pressure on employers to respond, says TS Anil, global chief executive of Monzo Bank. The online bank based in London officially launched U.S. operations earlier this year; it employs more than 2,500 people globally. Monzo doesn't have physical banks but instead is based on a digital app that consolidates a user's financial information.

Born in India, Mr. Anil has worked around the world at companies including Standard Chartered, Citigroup and Capital One. He was global head of payment products and platforms at Visa before joining Monzo in 2020.

He says he has spent much time in recent months considering where work is headed and how the financial-technology company's own workplace policies should evolve. Monzo this year rolled out a three-month paid-sabbatical program for staffers who have been at the company four years or more.

The company is also aiming to stay ahead of changes in the ways consumers manage their finances while competing with its larger bank rivals. Mr. Anil spoke with The Wall Street Journal about what he's focused on next.

The job market right now is tight—workers have more leverage, and employers have re-

sponded. Five years from now, will employees have as much power as they do today?

What has continued to change slowly over the last several years—but then Covid quite possibly accelerated—is the shift in mindset about what it means to work. People, increasingly, don't want their jobs to just be about, "I go do this, and I get a paycheck." People want meaning from their work, people want the ability to work in ways that work around their lives effectively. That shift creates opportunity for companies like us who are leading the way in terms of understanding what employees want and are willing to not be anchored to a historical way of doing things. So, yeah, I don't think things go back in five years; this is an important cultural shift, and it's a welcome cultural shift.

What are the new benefits companies will need to offer in the future to get employees to stay?

It's hard to speculate on specific benefits. At Monzo, we've always been about our values. One is this idea that you help everyone belong. And it means we come up with ways that we can institutionalize policy to make everyone get that sense of what works best for them. We announced additional paid leave for colleagues of ours who suffer pregnancy loss, or who are undergoing fertility treatments. This is one where it feels like this should have always been offered by companies.

What was it that prompted you to offer paid sabbaticals?

We're now going on seven years



Monzo Bank
global CEO
TS Anil at the
online bank's
office in London.

old, and building a bank—or really any kind of tech company—and scaling it is a marathon, not a sprint. And we're at the stage where enough of our employees have put in a few years of incredibly hard work. It felt like a good time to give people the ability to take a break, recharge, come back with even more energy to continue this marathon that we're all excited to be on.

What's the biggest change you expect to see in the banking industry in the next 10 years?

The biggest thing that I hope we see is making money work for everyone, which means really giving people the tools to make great decisions for themselves,

to help them understand and make sense of their money. It's still amazing and sad how little customers around the world are supported in all decisions related to their money. It's such a source of anxiety for customers, that I'm hoping that, in the next decade, as an industry, we've solved that problem.

Is there a specific shift you foresee in how people will manage their money?

What I aspire to for us is that across all of your financial needs—whether it's spending, paying, transacting borrowing, saving, investing—all of that happens in a single place. So as an individual trying to make sense of my money, I can see it

all in one place; I can visualize it, I can analyze it.

What are the challenges you feel the company will need to overcome to fulfill this vision?

It's important that we continue to evolve our culture for the scale that we're growing into. That's probably the single biggest one, to make sure that you preserve the best aspects of your culture—what we internally describe as the golden threads. Keep the golden threads, let go of the stuff that's not working and keep evolving it. If you can get that right, then you can continue to scale and continue to have impact.

Interview has been condensed and edited.

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