

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

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DJIA 21948.10 ▲ 55.67 0.3% NASDAQ 6428.66 ▲ 0.95% STOXX 600 373.88 ▲ 0.8% 10-YR. TREAS. ▲ 7/32, yield 2.122% OIL \$47.23 ▲ \$1.27 GOLD \$1,316.20 ▲ \$8.10 EURO \$1.1910 YEN 109.98

What's News

Business & Finance

Gasoline prices surged to a two-year high at the pump, a sign of economic fallout from Harvey spreading throughout the U.S. A1

◆ Wells Fargo said its sales-practices scandal was far broader than previously acknowledged, as it raised the tally of suspect accounts. A1

◆ U.S. inflation remained subdued in July while household spending rose, underscoring the conundrum faced by the Fed. A2

◆ Economic data helped push stocks higher, extending a streak of monthly advances. The Dow rose 55.67 points to 21948.10. B11, B12

◆ Packaged-food firms are coming under pressure from retailers that are pushing big brands to lower prices. B1

◆ Top executives at a range of companies have banded together to urge Trump to preserve the "Dreamers" immigrant program. A3

◆ Four firms were selected to build short sections of wall as models for the U.S.-Mexico border barrier. A3

◆ Tenet said its CEO will step down in coming months. The hospital chain also adopted a "poison pill" plan. B1

◆ The NLRB filed a complaint against Tesla over alleged unfair labor practices at the firm's Fremont, Calif., plant. B3

◆ Georgia Power told regulators it wants to continue the expansion of the Vogtle nuclear-power plant despite higher cost estimates. B3

◆ Arizona filed a lawsuit claiming Insys Therapeutics improperly marketed a powerful opioid painkiller. B3

World-Wide

◆ Trump's lawyers have met with special counsel Mueller and submitted memos arguing the president didn't obstruct justice by firing Comey and calling into question the ex-FBI chief's reliability. A1

◆ Harvey's wall of water destabilized a chemical plant outside Houston, initiating a slow-moving crisis that officials said they are powerless to prevent. A4

◆ The administration is ready to block Russia's Rosneft from gaining control of critical energy assets in the U.S. owned by Venezuela. A1

◆ The State Department ordered Russia to close its consulate in San Francisco and two other U.S. properties. A7

◆ Macron unveiled the labor overhaul at the center of his drive to revive France's economy, drawing muted criticism from unions. A6

◆ The federal government is cutting nearly \$116 million from outreach programs aimed at signing up people for the ACA. A3

◆ The U.N.'s nuclear watchdog said Iran is continuing to comply with terms of a 2015 nuclear deal. A6

◆ Warplanes from the U.S., Japan and South Korea joined in a show of force directed at Pyongyang. A8

◆ The administration and top GOP lawmakers intend to release a more detailed tax plan in the next few weeks, Mnuchin said. A2

◆ A Pakistani court acquitted five men of involvement in the 2007 assassination of ex-Premier Benazir Bhutto. A7

CONTENTS Markets B11-12
Business News B3-5 Opinion A13-15
Crossword A10 Sports A12
Harvey A4 Technology A4
Heard on Street B12 U.S. News A2-3
Life & Arts A10-11 Weather A10
Mansion M1-8 World News A6-8

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In Wake of Storm, a Reckoning With Damage



CLEANUP: Alejandra Castillo takes a break from carrying water-soaked items out of her family's home after floodwaters in her Houston neighborhood receded on Thursday. Elsewhere, containers of unstable chemicals stored at a plant near Houston caught fire, sending up thick smoke. A4

Trump Attorneys Argue To End Obstruction Probe

WASHINGTON—Lawyers for Donald Trump have met several times with special counsel Robert Mueller in recent months and submitted memos arguing that the president

By Peter Nicholas,
Erica Orden
and Paul Sonne

didn't obstruct justice by firing former FBI chief James Comey and calling into question Mr. Comey's reliability as a potential witness, people familiar with the matter said.

The legal arguments and

meetings offer the first detailed look at the interplay between the wide-ranging investigation and the team that is representing the president since the special counsel was appointed by the Justice Department on May 17.

One memo submitted to Mr. Mueller by the president's legal team in June laid out the case that Mr. Trump has the inherent authority under the constitution to hire and fire as he sees fit and therefore didn't obstruct justice when he fired Mr. Comey as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

in May, these people said.

Another memo submitted the same month outlined why Mr. Comey would make an unsuitable witness, calling him prone to exaggeration, unreliable in congressional testimony and the source of leaks to the news media, these people said.

Obstruction of justice is one piece of Mr. Mueller's probe that looks directly on Mr. Trump's conduct in the White House. Congressional investigators continue to explore the issue of obstruction, as well as

Please see PROBE page A2

Wells Fargo Raises Its Tally of Fake Accounts

By EMILY GLAZER

Wells Fargo & Co. said its sales-practices scandal was far broader than it had previously acknowledged, ensuring that the bank will continue to face scrutiny about a problem that has weighed on it for nearly a year.

Wells Fargo said Thursday that 3.5 million "potentially unauthorized" customer accounts were opened as a result of improper sales tactics, a 67% increase over the 2.1 million fig-

ure it made public last fall.

The disclosure, made at the conclusion of a review of the misconduct, comes against a backdrop of fresh missteps within Wells Fargo's consumer-lending operations and significant underperformance in the stock market compared with its big-bank peers.

The sales scandal erupted last September when the San Francisco bank admitted that employees opened customer accounts using fictitious or unauthorized information to meet

lofty sales goals. The revelation led to congressional hearings, the abrupt retirement of its then-CEO and a decision by the bank's board to claw back tens of millions of dollars in compensation from some top executives.

Wells Fargo said Thursday that it is providing \$3.7 million in additional customer refunds as a result of the revised count of fake accounts.

"We apologize to everyone who was harmed by unacceptable sales practices that oc-

curred in our retail bank," Wells Fargo Chief Executive Timothy Sloan said in a statement. "Today's announcement is a reminder of the disappointment we caused to customers and stakeholders," he added on a media call.

The latest disclosure is likely to keep the bank in the regulatory spotlight and boost the possibility of future congressional hearings, analyst Jaret Seiberg of Cowen Group Inc. wrote in a client note.

Although Wells Fargo agreed

to a \$185 million settlement with regulators last September, the sales-practices issues have sparked a number of federal and state investigations, including from the Justice Department.

Mr. Sloan, who took over from John Stumpf late last year, said on the media call that there aren't any updates on those investigations.

Please see WELLS page A8

◆ Vanguard flexed its muscles on Wells Fargo B10

Grime and Punishment: Belgium's Top Courthouse Is Falling Apart

* * *

The Palais de Justice suffers cracked stonework, fungus; a 'pestilential' smell

By VALENTINA POP

BRUSSELS—Here's a new one for you: Why did the Belgian police officer put on a hazmat suit?

To visit the courthouse.

This August, when two police forensics experts showed up to retrieve a mobile phone from an evidence storage area at the Palais de Justice in Brussels, they were forced to don the sort of garb you'd expect to see at the site of a chemical spill.

The only joke here, if you can call it that, is the condition of the city's 134-year-old courthouse—the very foundation of Belgian justice. It's a crumbling, mold-infested wreck.

Outside, the scaffolding installed decades ago to keep the

building's cracked stonework from falling on passersby is so old that some of it needed its own scaffolding during repairs.

Inside, the ceilings are collapsing in places, the biblical statues in the marbled halls are coated in dust and some rooms are infested with fungus. The

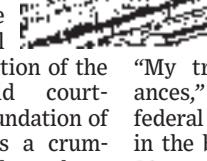
palace's vast atrium, darkened since the double-height main doors were shut for security, has the ambience of a tomb.

Officials say palace renovations should be completed by 2028. But even that distant target inspires skepticism.

"My trust in such reassurances," says Luc Hennart, a federal judge who has worked in the building for more than 30 years, "is zero."

The palace's condition has

Please see PALACE page A9



INSIDE

J.J. Watt's Rush for Houston

JASON GAY, A12

THE SUV MARKET'S NEW HIGH ROLLERS

BUSINESS & FINANCE, B1

IN DEPTH, A9

U.S. Poised to Block Russian Deal

By IAN TALLEY

WASHINGTON—The Trump administration is ready to block a Russian state-owned oil giant from gaining control of critical energy assets in the U.S. owned by Venezuela, senior American officials say, a move that likely would feed tensions between Washington and Moscow.

Petróleos de Venezuela SA offered Russia's PAO Rosneft

nearly half of the shares of its

U.S.-based subsidiary Citgo Petroleum Corp. as collateral for \$1.5 billion in loans the Russian firm made in 2016 to help prop up cash-starved PdVSA and its owner, the Venezuelan government.

The planned move comes after some U.S. lawmakers, worried the Russian oil company could gain a controlling interest in a company that represents roughly 5% of U.S. crude-oil refining capacity, urged the

Trump administration in June

to use powers granted under national security laws to prevent the deal from happening.

Rosneft sees the potential for its Citgo deal in the U.S. souring and has tried to line up new collateral for its loans, say two people familiar with the matter.

Besides arranging interests in major oil-producing opera-

Please see DEAL page A7

◆ Russia is ordered to close three U.S. properties A7

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U.S. NEWS

Programs Promoting Obamacare Face Cuts

BY STEPHANIE ARMOUR
AND ANNA WILDE MATHEWS

The federal government is cutting nearly \$116 million from outreach programs aimed at signing people up for the Affordable Care Act, a move that has cheered the health law's opponents but inflamed Democrats who fear President Donald Trump's administration is undermining it.

The Department of Health and Human Services plans to spend \$10 million during the coming open-enrollment period on advertising, including emails, texts, radio ads and digital promotions, officials said Thursday. That is a 90% drop from about \$100 million spent by former President Barack Obama's administration during the last open-enrollment season.

The enrollment period starts Nov. 1 and lasts 45 days, and HHS officials said there is no evidence the ads have boosted enrollment in the past. About 10.3 million people signed up and paid for coverage as of March 2017, down from 10.8 million in March 2016.

The administration is also cutting grants to organizations that help consumers understand their coverage and financial-aid options under the law. HHS will give \$36.8 million in grants in 2017 to such groups, known as "navigators," a drop of about 40% from the \$62.5 million awarded in the previous enrollment period.

Agency officials said they are basing that funding on the navigators' ability to reach their enrollment goals. An organization that met 30% of its sign-up goal, for example, would get 30% of the grant it had previously received.

The administration's approach to the open-enrollment period is being closely watched because Mr. Trump, a Republican, has called for letting Obamacare, as the law is known, collapse.

The law's advocates said an aggressive promotion strategy is vital for getting younger, healthier people to sign up. The efforts are needed to counter the costs of older and sicker consumers, they said.

The announcement is "very concerning," said Martin Hickey, chief executive of New Mexico Health Connections, a nonprofit insurer. "I think we're going to see a significant drop in people, which is very unfortunate," he said. "That makes a sicker pool" of enrollees.

The law's critics said spending on advertising and other assistance amounts to wasting money.

"This is a win," said Levi Russell, a spokesman for Americans for Prosperity, a conservative policy group. "Only in Washington would it make sense to spend north of a hundred million dollars trying to convince Americans that Obamacare isn't collapsing."

—Michelle Hackman contributed to this article.

◆ The math behind higher health deductibles..... B4

Firms to Build Border Wall Models

Four winning bidders will make prototypes for barrier to check illegal immigration

BY ALICIA A. CALDWELL
AND LAURA MECKLER

Four companies were selected to build short sections of concrete wall as models for the U.S.'s border barrier with Mexico, in the first significant step toward fulfilling President Donald Trump's campaign promise.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection announced the four bid winners Thursday. They are Caddell Construction Co. LLC from Montgomery, Ala.; Fisher Sand & Gravel Co., doing business as Fisher Industries, in Tempe, Ariz.; Texas Sterling Construction Co. from Houston; and W.G. Yates & Sons Construction Co. in Philadelphia, Miss.

The average cost of the prototypes is about \$450,000, and they will be 30 feet long and up to 30 feet high and made of solid concrete, according to Ron Vitiello, acting deputy commissioner for the border security agency. They will be built in San Diego.

Officials said the models will be evaluated to see which



MANUEL BALCE CENETA/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ron Vitiello, acting deputy commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection, showed a concept illustration of a U.S.-Mexico border enforcement zone during a news conference Thursday.

will work best. There could be multiple winners, or an alternate design could win.

Construction could start within a couple of weeks.

The agency will announce winners for a second bid, for other types of wall designs, as soon as next week. The administration said it is only considering concrete as a secondary barrier for areas where fencing already exists.

Mr. Trump first promised

to build a wall at the Mexican border to check illegal immigration when he launched his presidential campaign in June 2015 and made it a central pillar of his campaign.

He also pledged that Mexico would pay to build the structure, an assertion the Mexican government has repeatedly denied.

Mr. Trump has threatened to shut down the government if Congress doesn't fund his

\$1.6 billion request to build the wall. GOP congressional leaders have said they don't want a shutdown, and many lawmakers believe a show-down over the funding is likely to be put off until December.

Though Mr. Trump has repeatedly said he wants to build a "big beautiful wall" with a "big beautiful door," he hasn't said how long the barrier would be.

A pair of contract notices

released earlier this year called for design proposals for a concrete barrier and other structures as tall as 30 feet. Proposed designs, the contract notices said, needed to be both difficult to get through or over but also aesthetically pleasing to people on the north side of the structure.

Mr. Trump has also recently changed his description of the wall from a solid structure to one that U.S. Border Patrol agents can see through. Officials say a solid concrete wall would only be built if it were placed alongside existing, see-through fencing.

There is roughly 650 miles of fencing already in place along the border, including in urban areas such as El Paso, Texas, and Nogales, Ariz. Nearly all that fencing can be seen through.

Former Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly, who is now Mr. Trump's chief of staff, has said whatever is built won't stretch from "sea to shining sea."

Building anything along the border can be difficult because of varying types of terrain—the Big Bend National Park in West Texas straddles the border and is marked by towering cliffs—environmental concerns and a treaty with Mexico.

A Bronx Tale: A Real Judge Visits Yankee Stadium



ALL RISE: Bronx-born Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor talked with fans Thursday in the 'Judge's Chambers,' a section where fans of Yankee slugger Aaron Judge sit.

Top Executives Defend 'Dreamers' Program

BY LAURA STEVENS
AND DOUGLAS MACMILLAN

Top executives at a range of companies, business groups and academic institutions banded together to voice support for an Obama-era program protecting young, undocumented immigrants amid concerns that President Donald Trump could end the policy.

In an open letter, more than 350 executives and other organization leaders urged Mr. Trump

and congressional leaders to preserve Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, a five-year-old program that offers a reprieve from deportation to nearly 800,000 people brought to the U.S. as children—known as "Dreamers."

"Dreamers are vital to the future of our companies and our economy," the letter says. "They are part of why we will continue to have a global competitive advantage."

The letter was signed by top

executives at dozens of tech firms, including Apple Inc., Amazon.com Inc. and Alphabet Inc.'s Google, as well as the chief executives of General Motors Co. and Starbucks Corp. and leaders of trade groups, nonprofit groups and investors including Warren Buffett.

The effort was coordinated by FWD.us, a pro-immigration lobbying group co-founded by Facebook Inc. Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg, who also

signed the letter.

The White House also has faced pressure to end DACA from critics of the program who complain that it wasn't authorized by Congress and is an overreach of executive authority. A group of conservative states have threatened to sue the administration if it doesn't act to end the program by Sept. 5.

Mr. Trump during the presidential campaign called the program an "unconstitutional executive amnesty," but softened his

stance after he took office. A White House decision on the program could come this week. The Wall Street Journal reported last Friday. White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said at a press briefing Thursday that a final decision concerning DACA hasn't been made.

Technology CEOs, in particular, have pressed Mr. Trump to support immigration policies that help more foreign workers stay in the country.

Cash-Strapped Private Colleges Cut Programs, Sell Assets

BY MELISSA KORN

Wheelock College, with about 1,000 students and falling financial reserves, has been searching for a lifeline all summer. In June, the Boston school put up for sale its president's house and a residence hall.

On Tuesday, Wheelock announced it had entered merger talks with Boston University, which sits a mile away and enrolls 33 times as many students.

Wheelock is far from alone in exploring creative—or, some higher education experts say, desperate—ways to survive. Incremental changes, such as adding online courses or tinkering with tuition discounts, didn't boost enrollment or revenue enough for many institutions.

Such businesslike decisions are a sign of the high stakes facing some small, private colleges as families balk at rising tuition and question the value of a liberal arts education compared with more vocational alternatives.

Sweet Briar Still Not Out of Woods

Sweet Briar College in Virginia got a new lease on life when an alumnae group rejected the administration's plan to shut it in 2015. They sued, raised money and installed a new president at the women's liberal arts college.

Two years later, the student body remains small and donor dollars are supporting almost the entire operating budget.

Sweet Briar's challenges show that even when a community rallies around a small,

private school, survival is far from certain.

"The alums came together and got the money to keep the doors open. That's when the hard work began," said Nalini Mani, a 1993 graduate. She said she worries that the leadership still lacks a clear path to long-term sustainability.

Sweet Briar welcomed 81 new freshmen in August, well below the 200 officials previously estimated the school needs to remain viable. President Meredith Woo said Sweet Briar came in significantly under budget last year and can afford a smaller class.

—Melissa Korn

by Inside Higher Education and Gallup.

"Many of these schools would not be making these moves were they not under significant financial stress," said Susan Fitzgerald, associate managing director at Moody's Investors Service.

More than one-third of colleges with full-time enrollments below 3,000 students had operating deficits in fiscal 2016, according to a Moody's report, up from 20% in fiscal 2013.

Facing a dire financial future, Marygrove College in Detroit announced earlier in August that it would discontinue undergraduate programs—which make up about half of its students—and focus on graduate students. The school had already trimmed its expenses as enrollment slid. It solicited new donors. It tried increasing its online presence and recruiting more students.

Marygrove closed out its fiscal 2017 with a \$4 million deficit. President Elizabeth Burns estimated the school was weeks away from running out of cash when it announced the plan to stop teaching undergrads. "How close to the brink can you get?" she asked.

Dr. Burns said that the move will cut overhead costs, and that she sees potential for growth in graduate students.

Officials at Aquinas College in Nashville, Tenn., also decided that the best chance for success was a slimmer portfolio. The school said in March it would drop business and nursing programs and eliminate residential living to focus on training Catholic schoolteachers.

The number of schools merging has risen substantially in the past few years.

Earlier this summer, Holy Cross College in Indiana sold 50 acres of its campus to the nearby University of Notre Dame, then signed a 75-year, \$1 lease for its use. The move enabled the school to pay off its debt.

Holy Cross, which historically served as a two-year college and feeder to schools

such as Notre Dame, had been operating at a deficit the past few years after a push into bachelor's degree programs and what officials now say were misplaced recruiting efforts didn't pan out.

The board of trustees nearly voted to close last winter as cash reserves went dry, said the Rev. David Tyson, now the school's president.

Meanwhile, there were nearly two dozen higher-education mergers and acquisitions from 2010 to 2017, nearly twice as many as in the 2000s, according to a tally by Parthenon-EY, a consulting firm.

In one such move, tiny Shimer College in Chicago was officially absorbed into North Central College in Naperville, Ill., this summer.

"There's the loss of autonomy" for Shimer, now that it is part of an institution with more than 50 times as many students, said Susan Henking, the Shimer president who brokered the deal. "There's also the loss of worry."



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WORLD NEWS

French Leader Details Revised Labor Law

Largest union levels moderate criticism at Macron's overhaul, won't join strikes

By WILLIAM HOROBIN
AND NOEMIE BISSEBRE

PARIS—President Emmanuel Macron unveiled the ambitious labor overhaul at the center of his drive to revive France's economy, drawing muted criticism from traditionally combative unions that have stymied such efforts in the past.

The changes, which the government plans to pass by decree this month, revise a thicket of rules and worker protections that businesses say discourage hiring and complicate negotiating work conditions with employees.

Their unveiling on Thursday marks a moment of truth for Mr. Macron, who has swiftly lost public support since sweeping into office four months ago. He has been consulting with France's unions for months in a bid to contain street protests that undermined previous efforts to lower chronically high unemployment.

Union leaders who met with the government were critical



The changes are central to President Emmanuel Macron's agenda.

of the overhaul but stopped short of all-out opposition. Laurent Berger, secretary-general of France's largest union, CFDT, said he was "disappointed" with the changes and vowed to "remain extremely vigilant in the months to come." In a victory for the government, however, he said the CFDT wouldn't join a

street protest planned by the far-left CGT union on Sept. 12.

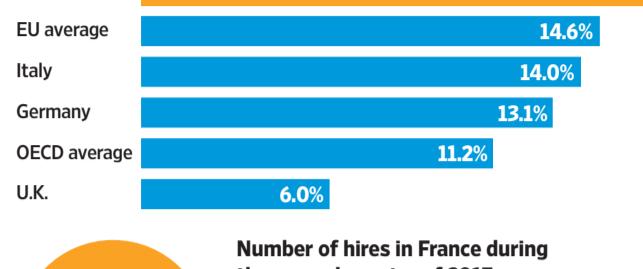
The most contentious measures include a provision that allows small companies to negotiate directly with non-unionized workers and a cap on court-ordered fines employers can face for layoffs.

Some 150,000 cases of allegedly unjustified dismissals are

Ducking Risk

French employers prefer temporary recruits because they see stable permanent contracts as too risky.

Percentage of work that is temporary employment



Number of hires in France during the second quarter of 2017 on...



Sources: OECD (employment); ACOSS (contracts)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The labor overhaul is also a starting point for his plans to reboot France's sclerotic economy, including revamping the welfare and pension systems and spending more on housing and jobs training.

"My wish isn't for this to be easy, but for it to be effective. The reform of the labor market is a reform of deep transformation," Mr. Macron said in an interview published Thursday in French magazine *Le Point*.

Europe is watching closely. Over the past decade, France has slipped behind other major economies in the currency bloc, racking up big trade and budget deficits and high long-term unemployment. Mr. Macron blames successive French leaders for failing to emulate Germany's changes to its welfare and labor rules in the early 2000s.

Economists say that making hiring and firing less risky will encourage employers to take on longer-term workers and invest more in new projects. That in turn could boost productivity and fuel economic growth.

French unemployment stands at 9.5%—more than twice the rate in Germany. Mr. Macron has set an objective of bringing unemployment down to 7% by the end of his five-year term in 2022.

Brexit Negotiations Bog Down Over Money and Timing

By VALENTINA POP
AND JENNY GROSS

After six months of largely civil conversations between Britain and the European Union, Brexit talks appear to be heading toward conflict. A third round of negotiations that concluded on Thursday failed to break the deadlock over money and the EU's insistence that it is too early to discuss its future relationship with Britain.

The tone between the main actors has sharpened. EU's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier said that while the four days of talks provided some

useful clarifications, "we did not get any decisive progress on any of the principal subjects." His British counterpart, David Davis, spoke of "significant differences to be bridged" and urged the EU to show more flexibility and imagination.

The EU is sticking to its position that it won't talk about future ties until it sees "sufficient progress" on details of the separation—including the financial settlement they expect from the U.K. based on its past commitments. The negotiators had been expected to reach that milestone in October but that now looks increasingly unfeasible, adding to the uncertainty for people and busi-

nesses on both sides of the English Channel.

Mr. Barnier expressed frustration over the lack of clarity from the U.K. on what it will-

The tone has sharpened between the main actors for the U.K. and the EU.

ing to pay. One official involved in the talks described the U.K.'s strategy as trying "to keep as many benefits of EU membership as possible" after Brexit.

On the British side, Mr. Davis complained the EU is failing to recognize that separation issues and future relations are "inextricably linked."

To break the impasse, both sides need to budge. But the calendar of political events in the U.K. and in Europe doesn't bode well for compromise soon.

"The earliest moment where we expect some movement is probably in October, and then time will be too short" to convince all member states to move on to the next phase, said a senior EU official involved in the talks.

The EU recognizes it loses leverage on the money issue when the talks move on to fu-

ture relations, so it feels no sense of urgency yet for discussing trade and other post-Brexit issues.

Another point made in Brussels is that London has sent mixed signals on what it envisions post-Brexit.

"Different members of the cabinet are saying different things—part of that is exacerbated by lack of a single major policy speech from the prime minister in six months," said Henry Newman, the director of the London-based think tank Open Europe.

In a challenge for Prime Minister Theresa May, the opposition Labour Party over the weekend called for the U.K. to

stay in the EU single market and customs union during the transitional phase. The shift could pressure Mrs. May to soften her stance to retain the support of pro-EU Conservatives.

Florian Otto, head of European research at consulting firm Verisk Maplecroft, said a failure to advance talks soon into future ties is the biggest challenge for the U.K. and risks creating further uncertainty for business.

"For British businesses, the crunchtime to make a decision on Brexit plans is believed to be somewhere toward the end of the year," Mr. Otto said. That doesn't leave much time.

Defeat of ISIS in Lebanon Gives Hezbollah New Sway



Syrian troops relaxed Monday with their tank next to vehicles transporting ISIS members from an area straddling the Lebanese border.

managed to position itself as the defender of the region's minorities, particularly Christians. That has generated domestic support well beyond Hezbollah's Shiite base.

Such an ability to build a broader consensus at home has provided Hezbollah, whose militia is one of the Middle East's most formidable fighting forces, with unparalleled political sway. After a two-year delay, the group's preferred candidate, Christian former army chief Michel Aoun, was elected Lebanon's president in October 2016.

Long-postponed elections for a parliament that would name a new government are slated for May 2018, and the giant victory rally Hezbollah held in the eastern town of Baalbek on Thursday is widely viewed as the kickoff of a

campaign to broaden its power—and its alliances.

Hezbollah's achievement in Qalamoun "will be regarded not only as the growth of its military might, but also of its political influence," said Imad Salamey, director of the Institute for Social Justice and Conflict Resolution at the Lebanese American University in Beirut.

Not everyone agrees. Many Lebanese were upset with how Hezbollah unilaterally negotiated with Islamic State—an approach that seemed to undermine the authority of the Lebanese army and the Lebanese state.

Regardless of such resentment, nobody in Lebanon today appears in a position to resist Hezbollah's strategic choices, especially now that its status has been consolidated by the outcome of its Qalamoun campaign.

One added complication is Lebanon's relationship with Washington. President Donald Trump described Hezbollah as "a menace to the Lebanese state, the Lebanese people and the entire region" during his meeting with Prime Minister Saad Hariri in July, and U.S. officials are looking for ways to punish the group as part of a campaign to roll back Iranian influence.

Hezbollah's formal role in Lebanon's government institutions, however, would make an argument against broader sanctions more difficult.

That is why the group is likely to be very careful in how it derives political gains from its victories against Islamic State.

Going forward, Hezbollah is likely to hew to its current strategy, preferring to exercise its authority indirectly and seeking collaboration from other parts of Lebanon's society, people familiar with the group predict.

"In Lebanon, it doesn't matter how strong you are, you have to govern by consensus," said Kamal Wazne, an expert on Hezbollah who heads a think tank in Beirut.

U.N. Clears Tehran On Nuclear Deal Terms

By FELICIA SCHWARTZ
AND LAURENCE NORMAN

WASHINGTON—The United Nations' nuclear watchdog agency said in a report Thursday that Iran is continuing to comply with terms of a 2015 nuclear deal, a finding likely to put the agency at odds with the Trump administration.

Officials who viewed the report by the International Atomic Energy Agency told The Wall Street Journal that Iran was well within the limits of permitted stockpiles of nuclear-related materials for uranium and for heavy water. Iran also didn't produce uranium enriched to a level beyond 3.67%, the maximum set under the agreement.

The metrics in the deal were designed to ensure that in coming years, it would take Iran at least a year to assemble enough material to fuel a nuclear weapon. In return for Tehran's agreement to curb its nuclear program, international powers have eased economic sanctions against Iran.

President Donald Trump said in July that he expects his administration to notify Congress in October that, in the view of the U.S., Iran isn't complying with the deal. That action is expected to trigger congressional action to reinstate U.S. sanctions on Iran.

The Trump administration has been lobbying diplomats and officials at the United Nations to increase pressure on Iran on a wide range of issues. The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Association, Ali Akbar Salehi, said this week that Iran would honor the deal even if the U.S. pulls out but other parties to the deal remain committed. He added that if both the U.S. and the European Union withdraw, then Iran would do so as well.

LIFE & ARTS

Spring Green, Wis.

AMERICAN PLAYERS

Theatre is the great open secret of American regional theater. Founded in 1980 in the tiny rural village that is also home to Taliesin, Frank Lloyd Wright's Wisconsin estate, APT produces nine plays each year, eight in the summer and one in the winter, performed in a handsome pair of theaters by a resident ensemble of 13 actors augmented by 31 summer-only performers, many of them company veterans as well. The repertory consists of classics and 20th-century masterpieces, and the audience is mostly drawn from the surrounding area. Surprisingly few people outside Wisconsin know of APT's existence, yet it is America's finest classical theater festival, unrivaled for the unfailing excellence of its productions. Nowhere else—not even in New York or Chicago—will you see such plays done more stylishly or excitingly.

This last comparison will ring especially true for anyone in a position to compare APT's magnificent new production of "A View From the Bridge"

LIZ LAUREN

with Ivo van Hove's self-indulgent 2015 Broadway staging. Unlike that flatulent exercise in Eurotrashy gimmickry, Tim Ocel's small-scale production of Arthur Miller's 1955 drama of incestuous love on the waterfront, mounted in the Touchstone Theatre, APT's 200-seat indoor house, is a masterpiece of sustained tension. Performed by a cast of the highest possible quality led by Jim DeVita, a 23-year company veteran, it is, together with Mike Nichols's 2012 Broadway version of "Death of a Salesman," one of the two best Miller revivals I've ever seen.

Every aspect of Mr. Ocel's production is distinguished, not least Takeshi Kata's set, a near-abstract assemblage of wooden warehouse pallets that is appropriately stark and austere. But it is Mr. DeVita who catapults it into the stratosphere. Unless you frequent Spring Green, you probably aren't aware that he is one of America's leading



Melisa Pereyra,
Jim DeVita and
Will Mobley in
'A View From
the Bridge'

to explain his incapacitating self-consciousness—and Mr. Ridge, who is as accomplished an actor as Mr. DeVita, speaks Rostand's verse with such fiery elegance that you are never in doubt of his fundamental seriousness. As for Ms. Rook, she is more than equal to the challenge of appearing opposite Mr. Ridge. Radiant and passionate, she is also palpably intelligent, which is the point of the part: She cannot love a man who is, like Christian (Danny Martinez), her younger suitor, beautiful but dumb.

Mr. DeVita has opted for his own English-language version of Rostand's 1897 play, much but not all of it cast in loose iambic pentameter, in preference to Anthony Burgess's stricter, now-standard verse adaptation. I can see why. Burgess's version is well-turned and marvelously witty, but it is not the work of a man of the theater. Mr. DeVita's adaptation, by contrast, reminds me of Charles Laughton's English-language version of Bertolt Brecht's "Galileo": Even the most ornately

phrased passages are easily speakable, an essential consideration for successful production in APT's 1,088-seat Up-the-Hill Theatre, the outdoor amphitheater where the play is being presented. It is the crowning touch of a "Cyrano" in which all the pieces fit together perfectly, one that I cannot imagine being bettered.

THEATER REVIEW | By Terry Teachout

Better Than Broadway

classical actors. Until now, though, I'd never seen him in a purely naturalistic role, and I confess to being just a bit surprised to discover that he can change hats with complete ease. His performance as Eddie Carbone, the hardworking, easy-to-anger Brooklyn longshoreman who harbors an illicit passion for his innocent young niece (Melisa Pereyra), is replete with the same force and focus that he brings to Shakespeare. Had Robert DeNiro chosen to be a classical stage actor instead of a movie star, he might well have given a performance as good as this one.

Mr. DeVita is also a gifted writer and director, and APT is featuring him in both of those capacities in his own adaptation of Edmond Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac," a play too often staged with a winking levity that undermines its wholehearted romanticism. Far from being a postmodern ironist, Rostand's long-nosed protagonist (James Ridge) is the truest of believers in old-fashioned heroism, and there is nothing remotely funny about his inability to confess his love to the beauteous Roxane (Laura Rook). Yes, "Cyrano" is corny, but if you play it that way, it

doesn't work: It must be done sincerely or not at all. That's why neither of the past two Broadway revivals, with Kevin Kline in 2007 and Douglas Hodge in 2012, quite came off. Both productions lacked the underlying gravity without which Cyrano's flights of rhetoric can end up sounding silly.

Mr. DeVita and Mr. Ridge, by contrast, give us a "Cyrano" of near-Shakespearean weight, never exaggerated and never frivolous. The harmonious nature of their approach is made clear as soon as Cyrano makes his first entrance—his nose is only just long enough

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American Players Theatre

5950 Golf Course Rd., Spring Green, Wis. (\$49-\$94), 608-588-2361

A View From the Bridge,
Touchstone Theatre, closes Oct. 22

Cyrano de Bergerac,
Up-the-Hill Theatre, closes Oct. 6

Mr. Teachout is the Journal's drama critic. "Billy and Me," his new play, opens at Palm Beach Dramaworks on Dec. 8. Write to him at tteachout@wsj.com.

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DEBORAH MOGGACH AND TOM STOPPARD

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SPORTS

NFL | By Jason Gay

J.J. Watt's Rush for Houston

"I would describe it as a 'subdued joy,'" J.J. Watt said. It was Wednesday afternoon, and the NFL superstar and his **Houston Texans** teammates were on a bus, finally heading back home.

No one on the bus knew exactly what to expect. The Texans hadn't been to Houston since the brutal and historic storm began. They'd moved as a team from New Orleans to Dallas to keep practicing, but had yet to see their flood-ravaged city.

"It's a bunch of guys who are very happy to be going home, and see their families and wives and kids," Watt said. "But it's difficult...some guys don't know what they're going to find when they get to their house. Some guys won't be able to go to their houses. And we know we're going back to a city that needs our help."

Watt had spent most of the bus ride on his phone, consumed with an impromptu internet fundraiser he'd started only a few days prior, as Harvey was pounding Houston and southeastern Texas.

Watt's fundraiser (located at youcaring.com/JJWatt) has become a social media phenomenon. His initial goal had been to raise \$200,000, with Watt kicking in \$100,000 himself to get things started.

But then it grew. Quickly. Exponentially. Beyond anything that Watt anticipated. Shortly after we spoke, Watt would confirm on Twitter that his fundraiser to aid flood victims in Houston and its surrounding areas had passed \$7 million.

Late Wednesday, a \$1 million check from Wal-Mart would arrive via Ellen DeGeneres's talk show, pushing the total past \$8.5 million.

Early Thursday, it rocketed past \$10 million.

"It's crazy," Watt said. "It's an unbelievable testament to the good



J.J. Watt's fundraiser for the victims of Hurricane Harvey has thus far raised more than \$10 million.

liked players in football. The former Wisconsin Badger is a three-time winner of the NFL's Defensive Most Valuable Player award, and his blond crewcut and hulking upper body give him the appearance of a real-life superhero. Watt's Texans jersey is one of the top sellers in the game.

The Texans cancelled their final preseason contest, set for Thursday with the Cowboys, in order to return home. But the team's Sep. 10 opener at home versus Jacksonville is fast approaching, and practices and preparations continued this week at the Dallas facility in Frisco, Texas, as the staggering news about deaths and devastation continued to arrive.

"The crazy thing is we're still doing our day jobs," Watt said. "We're still going to practice; we're still having meetings. We lock in, we focus on our jobs, but the second we're out of meetings I go to straight to my phone and check on the fundraiser, check on people running logistics on the trucks, and we're always watching the news."

It's been difficult for the Texans players to watch the flood reports from afar, Watt has said this week. Houston is a "massive city with a small town feel," he told me. He joked that even though he'd gotten booted on draft night, the city had quickly welcomed him and his family.

"They treated me as one of their own," he said.

Now he is one of many residents urgently trying to give back. Watt said this weekend that he and his teammates would be helping to unload trucks and distribute supplies to those who needed them.

Football was coming, and football is always big in Texas. But one of the game's best knew it could hold off for bit.

"This is so much bigger than football," J.J. Watt said.

of people. But now it's a big task, trying to make sure this money goes directly to the people."

Watt's fundraiser is a low-key production. In between Texans practices, he's been handling a lot of the logistics personally, with help from his mother, Connie. Its appeals have simply been Watt posting videos of himself updating the fundraising efforts and goals.

"Every little thing helps," Watt said in a video posted early Wednesday. "Just because the storm is re-

ceding doesn't mean we can stop raising money."

Immediate purchases have included food, water, clothing, generators and cleaning supplies for people impacted by the storm. Watt said the first trucks full of supplies were about to leave for Houston from his home state of Wisconsin—his high school in Pewaukee, Wis., has been gathering donations—with another group of trucks departing from Utah. (The storm had made it harder to locate trucks

closer to Houston, Watt said.)

More than 70,000 individual donations have come in, Watt told me. They range from modest contributions of a few dollars to Wal-Mart's \$1 million to another \$1 million from Amy Adams Strunk, the owner of the Tennessee Titans, one of Houston's rivals in the AFC South. Other Texans players and Houston athletes, like new NBA Rockets point guard Chris Paul, have chipped in as well.

It doesn't hurt that Watt, 28, is one of the most recognizable and

The frustrations reached their nadir this week, when the Yankees gave Judge what Girardi described as a mental and physical break. Judge rested two days, even abstaining from batting practice, before returning as a pinch hitter in the ninth inning of the first game of Wednesday's doubleheader against the Cleveland Indians. He struck out.

Time will tell whether the rest helped. Upon returning to his customary cleanup spot in the nightcap Wednesday, Judge went 1-for-3 with a walk and an infield single. On Thursday, the Yankees dropped Judge to sixth in the order.

Girardi tried to portray the benching partially as an opportunity for Judge to clear his head, but Judge dismissed that idea. Judge did acknowledge the physical benefit of sitting, admitting that his "whole body is kind of beat up," but he refused to blame a particular injury for his issues.

Specifically, both Judge and Girardi tried to downplay the impact of Judge's left shoulder, a crucial body part for a right-handed swinger. Judge has received frequent treatment on that shoulder of late and conceded that the Yankees have discussed the possibility of a cortisone shot to alleviate the discomfort. "I believe his struggles are mechanical," Girardi said. "But it has nothing to do, in our mind, with his lead shoulder."

MLB

AARON JUDGE'S EPIC SECOND-HALF FADE

BY JARED DIAMOND

THE New York Yankees began a crucial series against the rival Boston Red Sox on Thursday, a four-game set in the Bronx brimming with playoff implications. Aaron Judge, the rookie sensation who less than two months ago emerged as perhaps baseball's brightest star, was in the starting lineup.

For casual fans, that sentence might sound obvious. Judge leads the American League in on-base-plus-slugging percentage, ranks second in the majors in home runs and remains the runaway favorite for Rookie of the Year. It stands to reason that a resumé like that would warrant a place in the lineup without much thought.

But Judge's place in the Yankees' order doesn't appear quite as secure these days, thanks to a massive slump that is bordering on historic.

After posting a .329 batting average and an almost unfathomable

1.139 OPS before the All-Star break, those numbers had plummeted to .181 and .691, respectively, ever since. Only two players have ever recorded a more precipitous decline in those categories from the first half to the second since the introduction of the All-Star Game in 1933.

Judge's sudden meltdown has left the Yankees in a difficult position: figuring out what to make of someone who went from looking like baseball's best player to one of its worst—practically overnight.

"He's been missing some pitches that he usually was hitting in the first half," Yankees manager Joe Girardi said.

Early on, Judge carried the Yankees, elevating them into contenders in a year initially cast as a rebuilding season. The Yankees lead the AL wild card race in large part because of Judge's heroics.

Judge's celebrity rose as he launched balls into previously unreachable parts of ballparks around the country. He received more All-Star votes than any other



Judge's second half is shaping up to be historic—and not in a good way.

AL player. In May, the Yankees officially dubbed three rows of the right-field stands at Yankee Stadium as "The Judge's Chambers," adding faux-wood paneling to resemble a jury box.

Lately, Judge hasn't done much to justify his own cheering section. He has struck out in nearly 45% of his second-half at-bats, setting an ignominious record by whiffing in 37 consecutive contests.

ADAM GANZMAN/GETTY IMAGES

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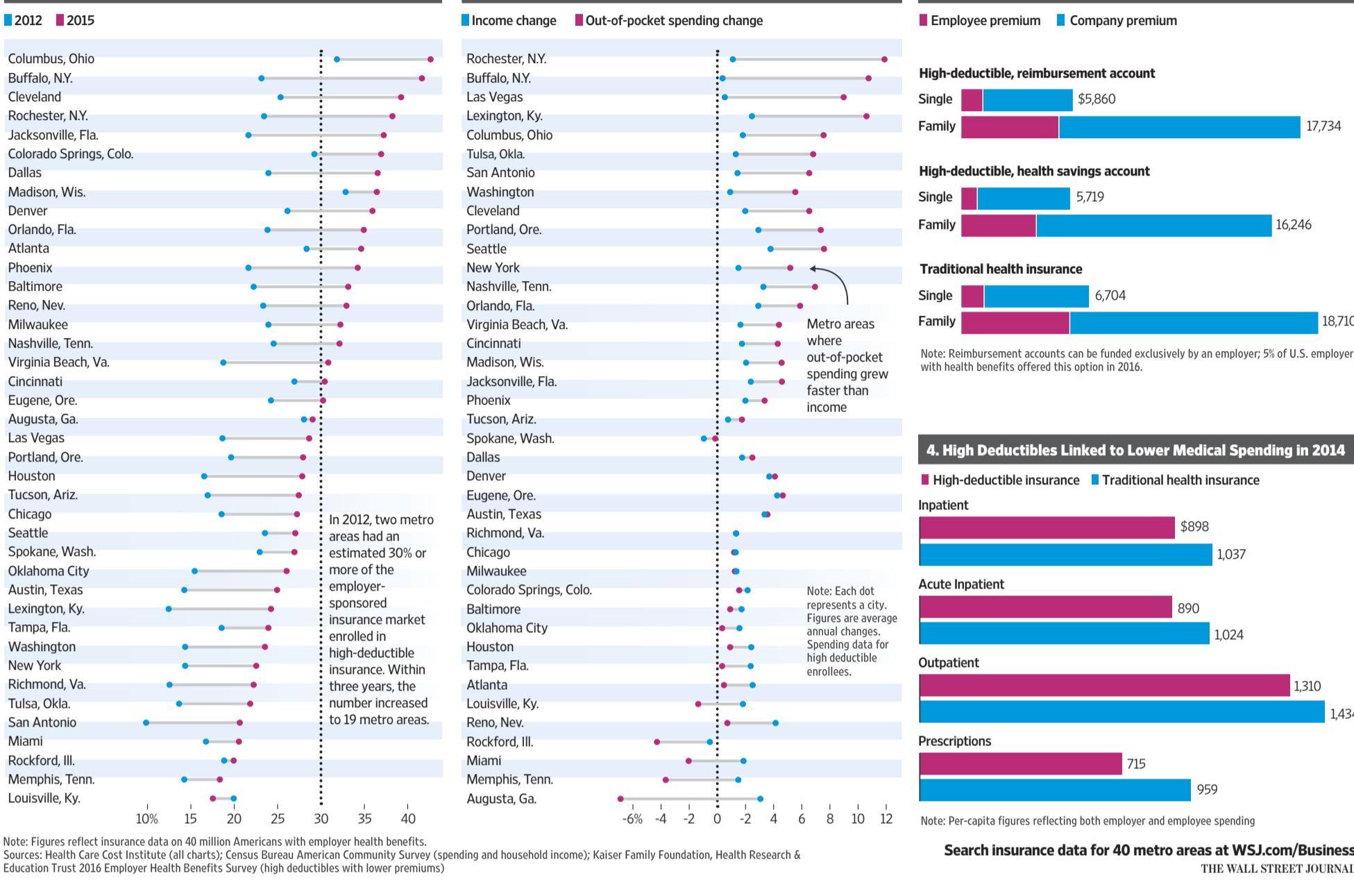
The Math Behind Higher Health-Care Deductibles

More U.S. workers are taking a bigger out-of-pocket hit from their employer-provided health plans.

High deductibles require patients to spend more of their own money before health insurance kicks in. Employers, the primary source of health insurance in America, have embraced high deductibles to cut what they pay for employees' premiums. New data from the Health Care Cost Institute offers a rare look at how widespread this type of insurance has become in employer-sponsored plans across 40 metropolitan areas (Figure 1). In the majority of these metro areas, American workers' income gains

were eroded by rising out-of-pocket spending between 2012 and 2015, the HCCI data show (Figure 2). High deductibles' surge in the workplace can be traced, in part, to the lower premiums such insurance plans charge workers and employers (Figure 3). Overall spending on care is lower in high-deductible plans than in traditional insurance. Why? Healthy workers choose high deductibles because they will spend less, and ill workers with high deductibles get less medical care, economists say (Figure 4).

—Melanie Evans, Yaryna Serkez and Merrill Sherman



Note: Figures reflect insurance data on 40 million Americans with employer health benefits.

Sources: Health Care Cost Institute (all charts); Census Bureau American Community Survey (spending and household income); Kaiser Family Foundation, Health Research & Education Trust 2016 Employer Health Benefits Survey (high deductibles with lower premiums)

Search insurance data for 40 metro areas at WSJ.com/Business.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

TECHNOLOGY

WSJ.com/Tech

Technology Aids the Houston Relief Effort

Businesses and public services use disaster recovery plans to keep their operations going

BY STEVEN NORTON
AND ANGUS LOTEN

Critical services and technology-infrastructure providers across Houston rallied to keep operations running through Harvey's widespread and catastrophic flooding.

Tim Tindle, the chief information officer for Harris Health System, and his team were setting up a "virtual clinic" inside Houston's NRG Center, which is prepared to shelter up to 10,000 evacuees. Harris Health is using a pre-configured network for disaster situations that it created after Hurricane Katrina, Mr. Tindle said.

The system allows physicians on site to access patients' electronic medical records as well as manage tasks such as registering patients and ordering medications.

Harris Health IT staffers were configuring personal computers and phones, building a tech network and establishing connectivity to medical records stored in the hospital system's data center.

"We will basically take long folding tables and those become our work areas where we set up computers and phones and everything that staff are going to need to see patients," Mr. Tindle said.

Many IT systems across Houston stayed online during Harvey, thanks in part to redundancy built into the systems. Houston Methodist, for example, connects its hospitals to its data center via two independent circuits, meaning data can flow through two separate routes to get to the facility.

The hospital system also keeps at least two sets of electronic health record data inside its data center, as well as a copy inside each hospital that clinicians can access if they lose outside connectivity.

"It's been a much smaller workforce on site given the transportation challenges."



A damaged H-E-B supermarket in Rockport, Texas. The grocer used microgrid technology to keep 18 Houston-area stores powered up.

created by the flooding, Robert K. Eardley, senior vice president and chief information officer, said. "We've asked everyone who is able to make it to bring a change of clothes...and have a sleeping bag in their car so that if conditions worsen they can effectively manage through that."

Grocery chain H-E-B leaned on new microgrid technology to keep power flowing to 18 of its Houston-area stores throughout the storm. Using a series of on-site generators powered by natural gas, the grocer was able to keep those stores open and its refrigeration systems running.

"We want to be open to take care of people, and that's difficult to do when you're running perishable products to the dumpster," said George Presses, H-E-B's vice president of fuel and energy. "This precluded us from having to do this. We took 18 stores off our worry list."

About 30 of H-E-B's 93 Houston and East Texas area

stores were closed during the peak of the storm on Monday, Mr. Presses said. H-E-B operates 391 stores, 333 of them in Texas.

Before Harvey hit, LyondellBasell, one of the world's largest plastics, chemicals and

refining companies, which has operational headquarters in Houston, reminded employees how to access their systems remotely and urged them to take home their laptops and cellphones.

Throughout the disaster, LyondellBasell held phone calls twice daily with its IT team, said Susan Guardino, the company's director of global infrastructure services. The

firm's global IT presence helped keep things operating smoothly when Houston-area workers had to deal with personal matters related to the storm, she said.

Data centers across Houston, which provide the physical infrastructure for information technology systems to operate at thousands of local and regional businesses and organizations, dug in to keep services available around the clock. None of the major data-center operators in the area reported service outages.

Data-center giant Equinix Inc. operates a 65,000-square-foot, one-story data-center facility about 6 miles from George Bush International Airport. Throughout the storm, a team of six workers were on-site at the facility, which had food, water and sleeping cots. Streets around the site had cleared of flooding earlier this week and a relief team of workers arrived Wednesday, the company said.

CyrusOne Inc., a Dallas-

based firm, had a team of 15 workers on hand at its Houston facility, which was stocked with food and water, and equipped with sleeping quarters "for just these types of situations," said Kevin Timmons, chief technology officer.

Edward Henigin, CTO of Austin-based Data Foundry Inc., said the firm's data center in North Houston was a "purpose-built facility designed to withstand Category 5 hurricane wind speeds."

Among other amenities, it includes showers and washing machines, and was supplied with food, water and sleeping cots ahead of the storm, he said. Data Foundry kept crews of three to five workers on duty throughout the storm, "sufficient staffing to allow people to rotate shifts over a 24-hour period," Mr. Henigin said. In addition to food, water and sleeping cots, the facility has a collection of books and videogames "allowing people to rest and relax" between shifts, he added.

Apple Confirms Sept. 12 Launch

BY TRIPP MICKLE

Apple Inc. on Thursday confirmed plans to hold its annual product-launch event on Sept. 12 at its new headquarters, making it the inaugural public showcase at the \$5 billion campus.

The announcement, confirming an article in The Wall Street Journal on Monday, formally sets the stage for the unveiling of a new, showcase iPhone loaded with features such as facial-recognition technology and wireless charging.

High expectations for that device have helped fuel a surge in Apple's stock price this year, capped by a nearly 10% run in August.

Apple said the event will be held at the Steve Jobs Theater in the new headquarters campus, which is still being completed. The 1,000-seat auditorium is located inside a circular, glass-walled structure with a carbon-fiber roof.

The company is expected to unveil three iPhones, including the pricier new model to mark the product's 10th anniversary and updates to the two iPhone 7 models that made their debuts last year.

Apple is projected to ship 25 million units of the pricier iPhone in the quarter that ends this month, according to Susquehanna International Group, even though sales of the phone aren't expected to start until Sept. 22.

Apple also is expected to unveil a new Apple Watch with an LTE cellular chip that can access wireless services such as emails, texts and calls without being tethered to an iPhone. And the company is likely to show off a new version of its streaming-media device compatible with 4K televisions that offer more than eight million pixels a frame—significantly sharper than traditional high-definition video.

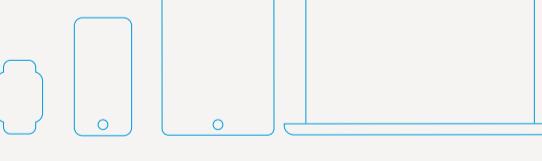
The image shows a collage of WSJ digital content. On the left, there's a market chart with columns for CHG and % CHG, showing various data points. In the center, a podcast episode titled "WSJ PODCASTS MONEYBEAT" is displayed, featuring a large "0%" graphic and a link to "SHOW TRANSCRIPT". Below it, a "LATEST" section lists several news items with small thumbnail images. On the right, a news article titled "CHINA'S NEXT TARGET: U.S. MICROCHIP HEGEMON" by Bob Davis and Eva Dou is shown, with a sub-headline about the semiconductor industry. The article includes a graphic of two balloons, one red with yellow stars and one blue with white stars, floating over a grey circle.

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MARKETS

A Month That Gave Markets a Shake

Politics and Harvey helped spur the return of volatility, demand for havens in August

By AKANE OTANI

A topsy-turvy August has reached its end. The Nasdaq Composite rallied Thursday, extending a record streak that was earlier in jeopardy as lower-risk investments such as gold and Treasury bonds appreciated. Volatility re-emerged in the stock market and the energy sector's slump deepened as the Gulf Coast oil industry took a heavy blow from Hurricane Harvey. Here's some of the highlights:

The S&P 500 posted more steep moves than usual, ending the day up or down at least 1% on three occasions in August. Low trading volumes likely exacerbated stock moves, ana-

Government bonds and their stock proxies rallied as the S&P 500 stalled.

lysts say, since many investors and traders leave for vacation in August. Another reason for the moves: political rifts. Stocks swung last month after President Donald Trump faced fallout over his response to protests in Charlottesville, Va., tensions spiked between the U.S. and North Korea and speculation arose about staffing changes in the White House.

Government bonds and their stock proxies rallied in August as the S&P 500 stalled. Utilities shares in the S&P 500, which many consider bondlike because of their hefty dividends, were the best-performing sector in the broad index for the month. Meanwhile,

shares of energy companies extended their declines for the year, falling beside oil prices after Harvey disrupted operations at U.S. refineries and hit demand for crude.

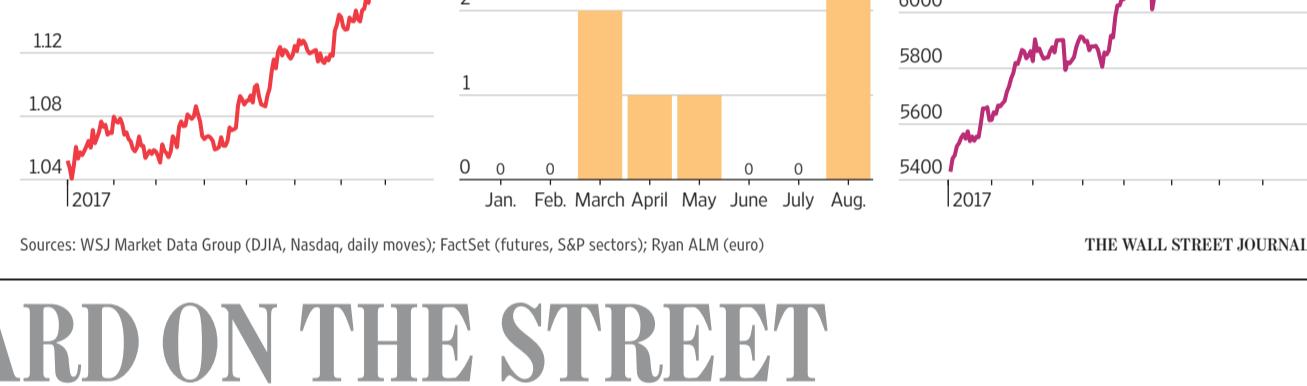
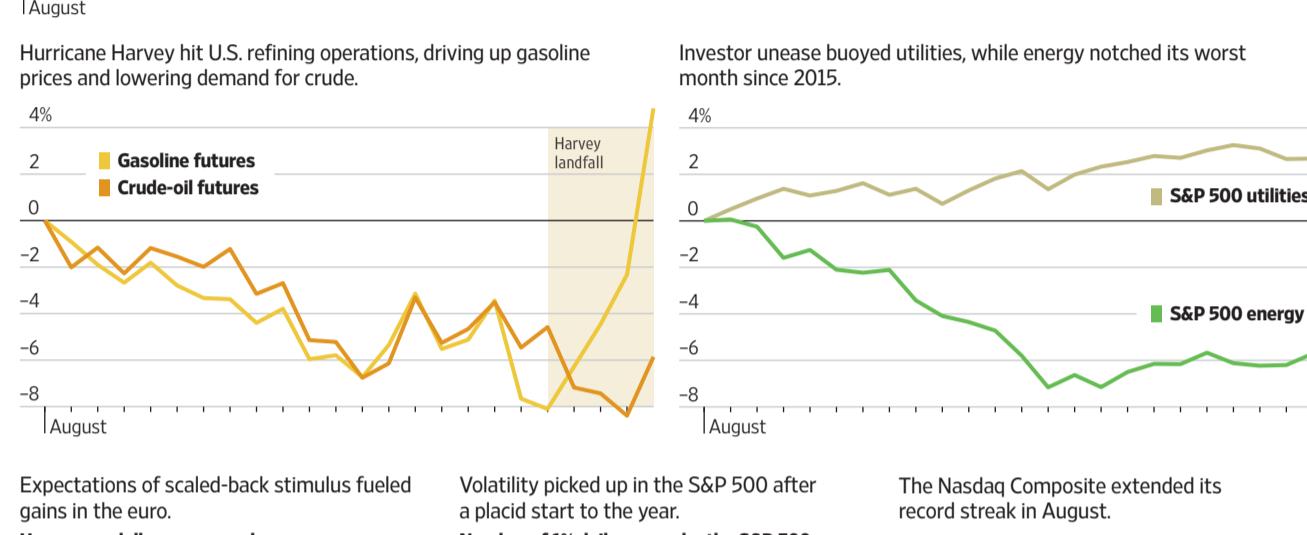
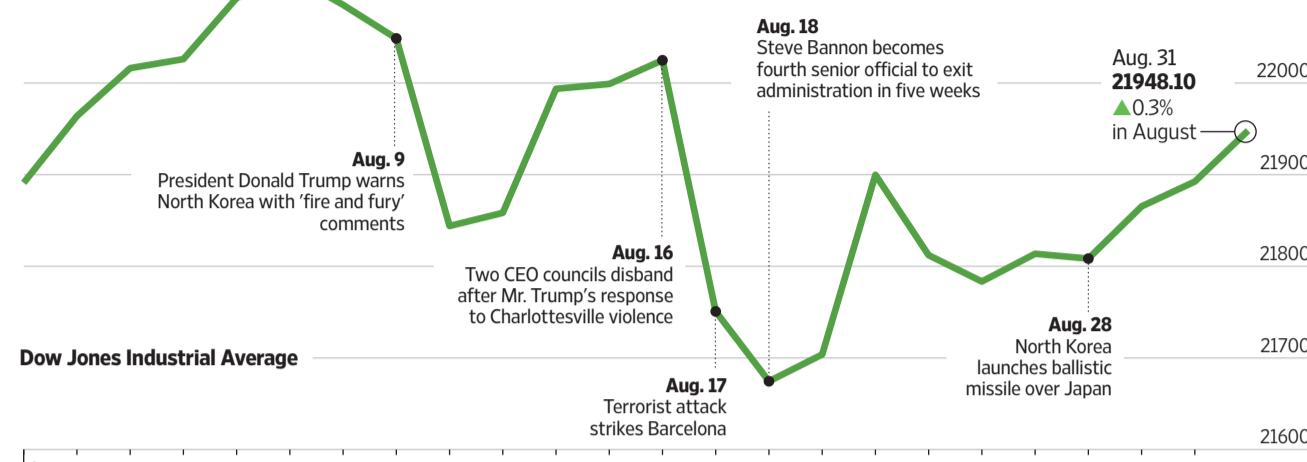
The euro continued to rally, hitting its highest level against the dollar since just before the European Central Bank announced its stimulus program in January 2015. Driving the euro's gains: growing expectations that the ECB will begin tapering its monthly €60 billion (\$71.3 billion) of bond buying as it runs out of assets to purchase. The euro is up 13% against the dollar this year.

Harvey dumped more than 50 inches of rain onto Texas, flooding cities and displacing thousands of residents from their homes. It is also estimated to have knocked out a third of Gulf Coast refining capacity—sending gasoline prices higher as analysts warned of potential shortages while hitting demand for crude.

The Nasdaq Composite, up more than the S&P 500 and Dow Jones Industrial Average this year as investors poured money into technology stocks, set a record on the last day of the month. If the index had failed to hit a new high Thursday, it would have marked the first time this year that the Nasdaq failed to post a new high in a month.

Shares of biotech companies jumped, with much of their gains coming in the last week of August after a string of corporate news. Gilead Sciences Inc. agreed to buy Kite Pharma Inc. for about \$11 billion, while the Food and Drug Administration approved a first-of-its kind cancer therapy developed by Swiss pharmaceutical firm Novartis AG—developments that traders said helped lend fresh momentum to the rally in biotechnology stocks. The Nasdaq Biotechnology Index climbed for a fourth consecutive session Thursday, putting it up 26% for the year.

August was an eventful month for global financial markets, with earnings, politics and global events upending a calm stretch of trading.



Sources: WSJ Market Data Group (DJIA, Nasdaq, daily moves); FactSet (futures, S&P sectors); Ryan ALM (euro)

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HEARD ON THE STREET

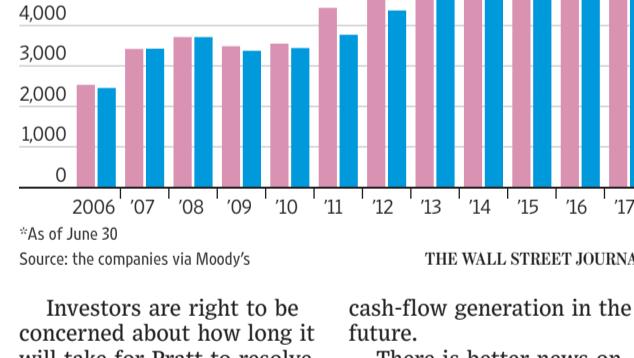
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Airbus Looks Ready for Takeoff

A Time to Build

Order backlog, number of planes



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Investors are right to be concerned about how long it will take for Pratt to resolve the issues, which it has promised to do.

But past lessons of aerospace technology delays is that they eventually get resolved, as was the case with Boeing's troubled 787 launch. And with Airbus's delivery schedule on the A320neo swelling to more than 600 planes a year by 2020, sorting out problems now will ensure smoother

cash-flow generation in the future.

There is better news on that front with Airbus's newest plane, the widebody A350, a competitor to Boeing's 787 for long-haul traffic. There are now 100 A350s in service, some having flown for over a year without the major problems that dogged other ambitious debuts. Investors will be relieved when Airbus delivers on its target of around 80 units this year.

Another overhang on the stock, possible cancellations, aren't the threat that they seem.

With the order book so large, a recent **Qatar Airways** cancellation of four A350s won't seriously dent cash flows. Other customers simply move ahead in the line. With passenger travel growing at more than 7% this year, and airlines' profits robust, buyers have little reason to abandon new orders en masse.

Airbus has traveled neck-and-neck with Boeing in terms of shareholder returns over the past 15 years, with the most recent period being an exception. In terms of valuation, though, Boeing's success and Airbus's hiccups have the two trading on their widest gap in terms of enterprise value to forecast earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization since 2011.

Airplane makers often stumble, but in the end get it right. Waiting for Airbus's problems to be fixed will be too late for shareholders to enjoy the flight.

—Alex Frangos

OVERHEARD

It is an investing foible as old as financial markets but with a brand new moniker: "FOMO."

Being fearful or greedy, given the right stimuli, kept us in the gene pool across the millennia. Sadly, those instincts are poisonous for investment performance.

With markets near record highs and all manner of assets booming, it is the greedy side of that continuum that is going to wind up costing some people a chunk of orders en masse.

It used to be that FOMO, the fear of missing out, was inspired by talk of big, if unproven, stock gains. Now a website, extremefomo.com, gives the exercise a level of precision. It invites people to type in various stock tickers to find out how much they might have made—\$1,000 invested in **Apple Inc.**, for example.

Picking a winner brings up a screen with flying wads of cash and a link to "get a free stock on Robinhood," the app for millennial traders, or "to get \$10 to buy Bitcoin."

Big Liquor's Weak Spot Is Vodka

But for their problems selling vodka to Americans, the world's biggest liquor companies would look in better shape.

In full-year results reported Thursday, Paris-based liquor company Pernod Ricard said U.S. sales of its Absolut vodka brand fell 2% over the year through June in a "worsening" market. The top U.S. vodka brand, Smirnoff, also is in decline, according to its London-listed distiller, **Diageo**.

One issue is consumer demand for the drink.

Having binged on vodka in the last decade, Americans increasingly favor aged, brown liquor. Last year the U.S. consumed 3.6% more whiskey, 7.4% more tequila and 9.9% more brandy, but only 2.2% more vodka, according to data provider IWSR.

Another headache for Diageo and Pernod is competition.

Two homegrown upstarts have taken the market by storm: Tito's, a craft-marketed brand from Austin, Texas, and New Amsterdam, made by Californian winery **E & J Gallo**.

The U.S. vodka problem has held back otherwise solid growth for the world's top two liquor companies. A wider worry is that other drinks brands in other countries could go the way of U.S. vodka and be overtaken by cleverly marketed new rivals.

When new brands do go viral, big companies can sometimes buy them, but this is expensive: In June, Diageo announced the acquisition of George Clooney's four-year-old tequila brand, Casamigos, for up to \$1 billion, or almost \$500 for every bottle sold. Could Tito's be next?

—Stephen Wilmot

Market Underestimates Risk Faced by Canadian Lenders

Americans looking north to Canada see a housing market that echoes their own before the financial crisis. While there are substantial differences that make Canadian lenders more resilient, investors still should be on guard.

Canadian housing prices have been rapidly rising for years, prompting local governments in frothy areas to take draconian measures such as a 15% tax on foreign buyers.

It isn't all foreign cash—Canadian debt levels also have soared. Last year its households had debt equivalent to 176% of disposable income, according to the OECD. That compares with

Upper Latitudes

Household debt as a percentage of disposable income



112% in the U.S., down from a 2007 peak of 144%.

Canada's banks, however, are showing no signs of stress. The country's six biggest lenders that dominate

this highly concentrated market have just reported solid quarterly earnings. Mortgage delinquency rates are only around 0.2%.

It helps that most Canadian mortgages are "full recourse" loans, making it much harder for borrowers to default and walk away.

Nonetheless, the risks are substantial. Unlike in the U.S., where 30-year fixed rates are the norm, the standard Canadian mortgage rate resets every five years. In July, Canada's central bank raised rates for the first time in seven years. Analysts expect more increases, especially after Canada reported strong 4.5% annualized gross

domestic product growth for the second quarter. That will make regular debt payments even more burdensome for Canadian households.

And even if Canadians can't walk away from their mortgage debts, they also owe auto, credit card and home-equity loans to the same handful of banks. None of these carry the same government guarantees.

At **Royal Bank of Canada**, **Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce**, **Toronto-Dominion Bank** and **Bank of Montreal**, home-equity lines of credit amounted to an average of 4% of total assets in the quarter through July. Along with mortgages, that

brings their total average Canadian housing exposure to an average 26% of assets.

Ratings agency Fitch says it believes Canadian banks "are at an inflection point regarding asset quality." Any uptick in defaults would likely hit share prices hard, especially since the big six trade at a high average valuation of 1.75 times book value. If there is a broader economic downturn, things could get ugly.

While there is no euphoria in Canadian bank shares—as a group they are roughly flat so far this year—the market is underpricing the risks they face.

—Aaron Back

Johnny Depp's
Kentucky horse farm
heads to auction
M2



MANSION

HOMES | MARKETS | PEOPLE | UPKEEP | VALUES | NEIGHBORHOODS | REDOS | SALES | FIXTURES | BROKERS

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

*This castle hath a pleasant seat.
The air nimbly and sweetly
recommends itself.'*
—William Shakespeare, 'Macbeth'

Friday, September 1, 2017 | **M1**

Ye Olde Castle for Sale

For those in search of their own magical kingdom, ancient castles dot the European countryside. And with sales currently in the dungeon, buyers may get a bargain.



SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

MODERN-DAY PALACE In Scotland, Craigcrook Castle dates to 1542 and has since then been enlarged and embellished. The castle, which is currently listed for about \$7.74 million, comes with more than 4 acres of land. The market for high-end properties is 'difficult,' says Anna Henderson, an associate with estate agent Galbraith in Edinburgh.

BY RUTH BLOOMFIELD

CASTLES ARE THE ULTIMATE trophy homes—vast, imposing and steeped in enough atmosphere to satisfy the most devoted "Game of Thrones" fan.

Becoming king—or queen—of a bona fide castle in Europe is a relatively simple business right now. The prime country-house market remains weakened after the recession, creating buying opportunities at a wide range of price points.

But, as Oliver Sanger can attest, while owning a castle might be a joy, finding an exit strategy can be a slow, slow process.

Dr. Sanger, a psychiatrist, and his wife didn't set out to buy a castle. With a residence on Manhattan's Upper East Side, they wanted a vacation home somewhere in Europe that was quiet and sunny. They homed in on the area around Perpignan in southeast France and, during a visit to view potential properties, they saw Château de Corbère outlined on a hilltop in the distance.

Intrigued, they went to have a look, and when

the housekeeper told them the 11th-century château was for sale it seemed like fate. They agreed to pay \$1 million for the property and its 25 acres of grounds.

That was 23 years ago, and in that time they have renovated the 6,997-square-foot, eight-bedroom, eight-bathroom château, created a garden and spent holidays there with their children and grandchildren.

Dr. Sanger, who is in his early 80s, said the real thrill was in restoring the château. "We had

Please turn to page M8

HOUSE CALL | BOB NEWHART

INSIDE

THE FIRST LAUGH WAS AT HOME

The comedian used humor to communicate with his father; gag phone calls from work led to a No. 1 comedy album.

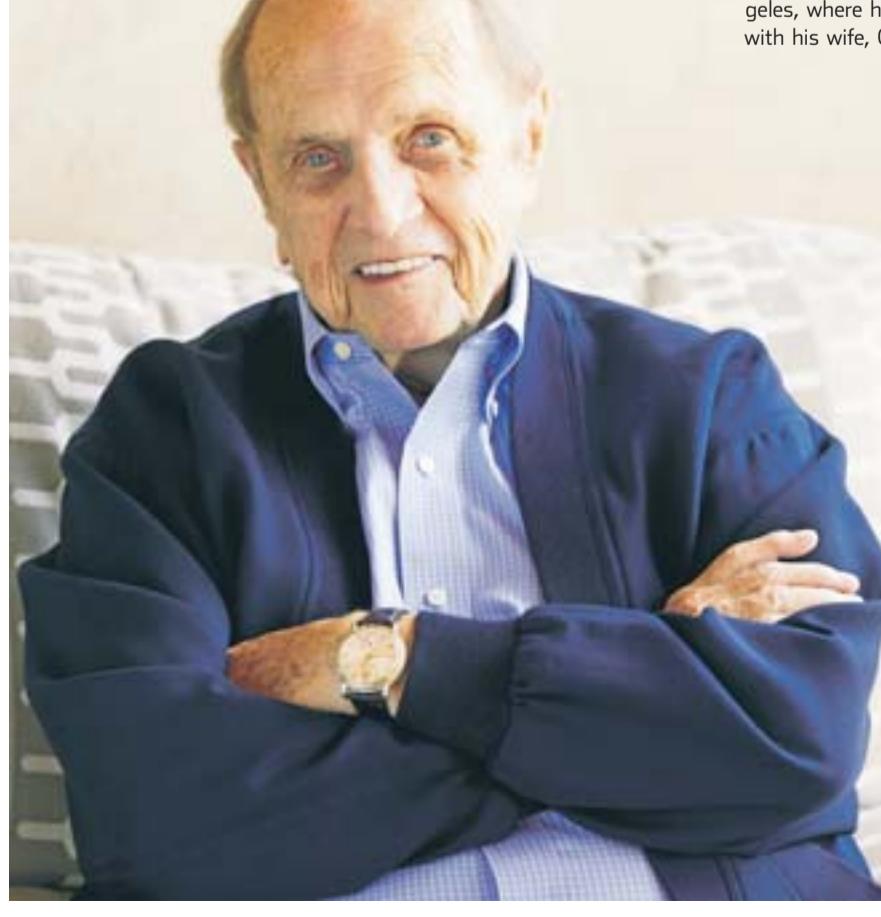
Bob Newhart, 87, is a stand-up comedian and actor who won three Grammy Awards in 1961 for his first comedy albums. He starred in two successful TV sitcoms, "The Bob Newhart Show" in the 1970s and "Newhart" in the '80s, as well as in films such as "Catch-22." He spoke with Marc Myers.

I came to comedy through a series of funny accidents.

When I was young, I never envisioned stand-up as a way to make a living. I was always the guy on the edge of the crowd saying things to people next to me and they'd laugh. I couldn't help myself. Stand-up was something I had to do.

I grew up in Chicago during the Depression. My father, George, worked for American Radiator, but he was among the last ones hired so he was the first one let go. Jobs were hard to come by then.

Fortunately for us, my grandfather on my mother's side owned the four-story building on North Menard Avenue where we lived. Our apartment was on the second floor.



FUNNY BUSINESS

Bob Newhart at his townhouse in Los Angeles, where he lives with his wife, Ginnie.

My grandfather ultimately lost the building and bought a smaller two-story one. We moved there and lived upstairs and my grandparents lived downstairs. Then he lost ownership of that one, so they moved in with us.

As the economy picked up, my father went to work at W.C. Morris, a company that sold plumbing and heating supplies. He was a good salesman who eventually had a 15% stake in the business.

When I was 12, we moved to a two-story, mixed-occupancy duplex on North Mason Street. When my grandfather on my father's side died, my grandmother moved in with us. She took my bedroom, and I slept in the dining room.

My father and I never had a close relationship. My mother, Pauline, filled the gap and often took me to see the Cubs.

My father was funny, and humor dominated the little contact I had with him. I remember us in the same room telling each other what was funny about the books we were reading. Like any kid, I

Please turn to page M3



LAKE TAHOE

Waterfront estate asks \$45 million **M2**



WATER WORKS

A couple creates their dream pool **M3**



BACK TO SCHOOL

Once schoolhouses, now quaint homes **M6**

MANSION



PRIVATE PROPERTIES

Johnny Depp's Horse Farm Heads to Auction

Nine months after going on the market, a Kentucky horse farm owned by actor Johnny Depp is headed to the auction block.

The property listed in December for \$2.9 million, said listing agent Gary Denton of Rector Hayden Realtors.

This isn't Mr. Depp's first time at the rodeo, so to speak: According to public records, he

first bought the property in 1995 for \$950,000, then sold it in 2001 for \$1 million. He bought it again in 2005 for \$2 million. The property was occupied by Mr. Depp's mother, Mr. Denton said, adding that he

doesn't know why Mr. Depp bought, sold and bought the property again.

About 8 miles from downtown Lexington, the roughly 41-

acre horse farm includes a 6,000-square-foot house with seven bedrooms, a four-car garage, a one-bedroom detached guesthouse, three barns, a pool and automatically watered paddocks, said Mr. Denton.

The auction will take place Sept. 15 on the grounds of the property as well as online. The reserve price isn't published, but the auction is subject to

seller confirmation, meaning that if the price doesn't satisfy the seller, he can turn it down.

An auction shouldn't be interpreted as a sign of distress; in Kentucky, auctions are a routine way of marketing property, said John Scott Durbin, an agent at Bluegrass Sotheby's International Realty, which isn't associated with the listing. He also said the local market is

strong, but that farm sales are typically slow moving and often need an auction to draw attention. It is typical to list a property well in advance of an auction to "set expectations" around the list price, he said.

Mr. Depp, star of movies like the "Pirates of the Caribbean" series, filed a lawsuit against his former business managers in January alleging mismanage-

ment of his fortune; the actor earned more than \$650 million over the course of his career. The Management Group filed a countersuit later that month, alleging that Mr. Depp overspent on luxuries including numerous properties around the world, causing his own financial distress. Both suits are pending.

—Katy McLaughlin



LAKE TAHOE WATERFRONT ESTATE ASKS \$45 MILLION



A waterfront estate on the west shore of Lake Tahoe is asking \$45 million.

For many years, the estate was the setting for the League to Save Lake Tahoe's annual Oscar de la Renta fashion show lunch, an event widely considered to be the social event of the summer season at Tahoe and which often attracts as many as 600 guests. Among the partygoers in recent years have been former Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer, entrepreneur Trevor Traina and Oscar de la Renta executive vice-president Eliza Bolen. More recently it has been taking place at a

property in Incline Village. In Tahoe City, Calif., the 6.2-acre property includes more than 400 feet of lake frontage and a private dock. The 5,322-square-foot main house has six bedrooms and five full baths; the 2,293-square-foot guesthouse has two bedrooms and 2½ baths. "It's a classic old Tahoe-style home," said listing agent Bill Dietz of Tahoe Luxury Properties.

The house sits on a quiet lane where only two lakefront estates have traded in the last 10 years, said Mr. Dietz. The property dates back to the 1920s, when then-owner Stewart Edward White named the estate Brushwood after Rudyard Kipling's "The Brushwood Boy," according to Mr. Dietz.

The seller is San Francisco philanthropist Tamara Fritz, who bought the house in 1996, according to public records.

—Sarah Tilton

BILL AND HILLARY CLINTON'S HAMPTONS SUMMER RENTAL SELLS



A Hamptons mansion that served as a summer vacation rental for Bill and Hillary Clinton has sold for \$29 million.

The Clintons stayed in the home for part of August in both 2011 and 2012, said Apollonia Baptiste, assistant to seller Elie Hirschfeld; she declined to say what the Clintons paid. Current listing agent Rebekah Baker of Sotheby's International Realty in the Hamptons said that in recent years the property has rented for between \$350,000 and \$500,000 for the summer, or for about \$150,000 a month.

"The president toured the Hirschfelds through the home and showed the rooms the president used to complete his book 'Back to Work,'" said Ms. Baptiste. The Clintons didn't respond to requests for comment.

In East Hampton, N.Y., the property is on 1½ acres with 200 feet of ocean frontage. The roughly 10,000-square-foot shingled house has eight bedrooms, all of which have en suite bathrooms and six fireplaces. It is located on a street "with a canopy of elms and grand homes on each side," Ms. Baker said.

Mr. Hirschfeld is president of Hirschfeld Properties, a large New York property developer.

He is the son of the late Abe Hirschfeld, a well-known New York real-estate developer. Elie Hirschfeld

bought the home in 1996 for \$3.2 million and renovated it extensively in 2002, said Ms. Baker. In 2015, just before list-

ing the house, he renovated the kitchen.

The property was listed in 2008 for \$31 million but was taken off the market; it went back on the market again in July of 2015 for \$32.5 million and went into contract that December, Ms. Baker said. It has been in contract for nearly two years, for reasons Ms. Baker declined to disclose, other than to say, "basically neither party needed to close quickly." The identity of the buyer couldn't be determined.

—Katy McLaughlin

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MANSION

ANNOTATED POOL

A Place to Chill When the Days Are Hot

A Franklin, Mass., couple created a backyard spa with bar, sofa, fire pit, waterfall, slide and music

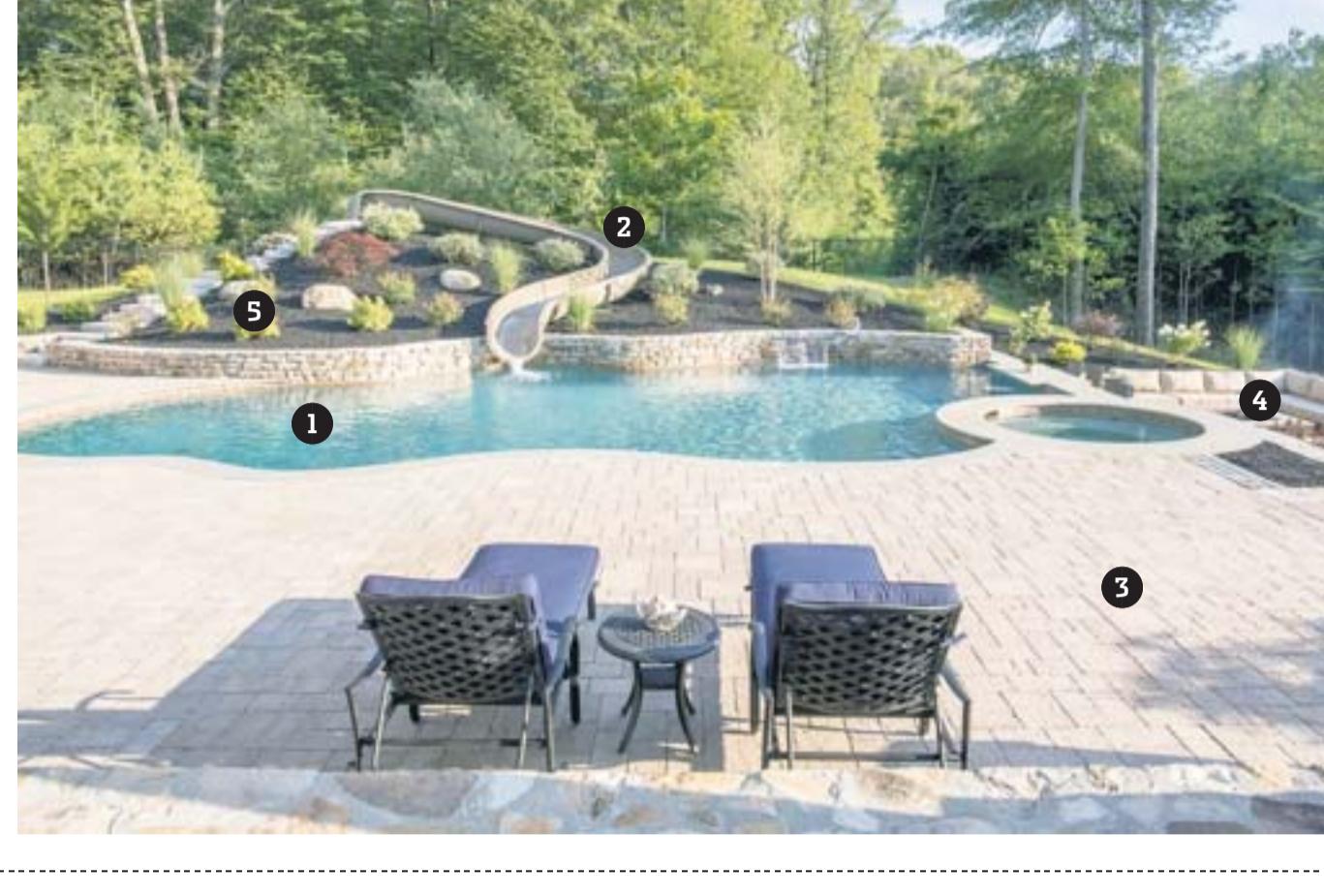
LIVING THROUGH HARSH New England winters, this Boston-area couple wanted to make the most of summer. To that end, they built a backyard pool with a slide, waterfall and swim-up bar. An outdoor entertaining area is outfitted with a fire pit, a plush sectional sofa and a spa.

The couple, who are in their 40s, have three children, the eldest of whom is 11. Their newly built home is located in Franklin, Mass., about an hour's drive from Boston, where the husband works in finance.

They turned to Andrew Everleigh of Chelmsford-based Environmental Pools to "design something with functionality but that the kids would enjoy." The project, which cost about \$500,000, began in July 2016 and was completed by Memorial Day 2017—with a winter break in-between.

Here are some of the components of the pool. Prices are approximate and can vary based on the materials and scope of the project.

—Beth DeCarbo



AL RANIERI (3)

1. DIVE IN

The saltwater pool is made of gunite, a mixture of cement, sand and water shot through a hose onto a reinforced frame. The interior has a pebble finish. The water goes from 3½ feet deep to 7½ feet. A waterfall adds visual interest and sound.

Price: \$70,000 for the pool and equipment

2. SLICK

To create a popular water-park perk, Mr. Everleigh designed a 32-foot water slide at the deep end. Water is pumped down the fiberglass chute to keep the slide cool and slippery.

3. ROCK CITY

The entire pool area measures about 2,200 square feet. Tech-Bloc pavers make up most of the stonework decking; the coping around the edge of the pool is bluestone. Retaining walls are made of Yankee special stacked stone.

Price: \$104,000 for the decking, coping and retaining walls

4. SOME LIKE IT HOT

An entertaining area can comfortably seat eight to 10 adults and features a

wood-burning fire pit. Nearby is a bar with bar stools and a refrigerator so drinks can be served.

Price: \$5,500 for the fire pit; \$4,000 for the sectional sofa by Madbury Road; \$1,300 for two Inter-Fab bar stools and \$3,000 for the Lynx refrigerator

5. GREENERY

The family wanted low-key landscaping that would be low maintenance. Grasses, Japanese maples, knockout roses and other plants were selected because they don't drop a lot of debris into the pool, Mr. Everleigh said.

Price: \$25,000

6. SIGHT AND SOUND

Extensive landscape lighting makes the pool area usable at night. Colored LED lights are also in the pool and spa. A sound system, controlled via smartphone, includes outdoor speakers camouflaged as rocks.

Price: \$13,500 for lighting and Sonos sound system

7. INSIDE JOB

A pool house includes a storage closet and a half-bath. The exterior wall features an outdoor shower for rinsing off.

Price: \$45,000

BOB NEWHART'S ROAD TO COMEDY

Continued from page M1
was trying to get my dad's attention. I don't think I was very successful at it.

I probably got my first laugh at home. When someone laughed at something I said, I liked how laughter sounded. I also wanted to hear that sound more. I still like hearing that sound.

My sense of humor got me through high school. Initially, I was good at imitating film stars. I had played the drums as a kid, so timing wasn't a problem.

My early hero was comedian Jack Benny. I loved how he'd take his time telling a joke on the radio and TV.

I stammered as a kid. You can hear it in my routines. But it was never a problem. I found that people finish your sentences when you start to stammer. They try to help you out, so you wind up off the hook.

I attended Loyola University and majored in business management and minored in accounting. I always had a head for numbers. Then I went into the Army during the Korean War. When I was discharged, I went to law school under the GI Bill.

Then I left to work as an accountant.

But accounting was painfully dull. To break up the day, I'd call my friend Ed Gallagher, who worked for the Leo Burnett ad agency in Chicago. We'd do improv bits over the phone.

For example, I'd pretend he was my boss and that I was calling from the yeast factory where we just had a fire. I'd tell him that the fire department had put out the blaze but that I had to run up to the next floor because the water from the hoses had caused the yeast to rise. Then Ed would ask me questions.

A friend of ours, Chris Pe-



COMEDIC CAST

Bob Newhart played psychologist Dr. Robert Hartley on his 1970s sitcom. The cast, clockwise from top left: Bill Daily, Marcia Wallace, Peter Bonerz and Suzanne Pleshette.

terson, thought the bits were funny. He said if we made a demo record, he'd make copies and send them out to radio stations. So we did, and Chris made 100 records of our five-minute routines.

Then Ed was offered a job at the BBDO ad agency in New York. I had to find another partner or go out on my own. That's when I convinced myself to try to make a living at comedy as a solo act. But it was a slow process, and I took part-time jobs to make ends meet. In the late 1950s, I worked behind the counter at the Illinois unemployment office. I was paid \$65 a week, but the claimants got checks for \$55 and they only had to come in one day a week. So I left.

Finally Dan Sorkin, a DJ friend at WCFL in Chicago, told Warner Bros. about me. They said if he recorded me, they'd listen to the tape.

By then I was doing comedy routines about Abe Lincoln, a driving instructor and a submarine commander. We taped those and others, and Dan gave Warner Bros. the reel.

Executives there liked it. They recorded me live at a

club in Houston, and "The Button-Down Mind of Bob Newhart" reached No. 1 on the Billboard album chart in 1960, the first time a comedy album had achieved the top spot.

As my stand-up career evolved, I became known for keeping a straight face and for a slight, endearing stammer. The stammer is real. As for the straight face, that's just my delivery.

Today, after living in the Bel Air section of Los Angeles for 40 some years, my wife, Ginnie, and I recently downsized to a townhouse in Century City.

I love my new home office. I have to be alone with my legal pad when I work on routines. Ginnie hates the office because it's a mess. But there's a certain order to it that only I realize.

Ginnie and I met in 1963 through comedian Buddy Hackett. When Buddy and I were first introduced, we started talking and I told him I had an accounting degree.

He said, "You mean you don't have to do this?" I laughed and said, "No, Buddy, I have to do this."

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The home features smart-home technology, a stunning gourmet kitchen with designer stone countertops and high end appliances, formal dining room, and custom cabinets and touches throughout. The luxurious master suite has its own fireplace, sitting room, custom closets and dressing areas, and a private balcony. The lower level features a state of the art fitness center and a high-tech media room. The professionally designed landscaping includes a 20x50 heated gunite pool, a modern pool house with fireplace for nighttime enjoyment, and plenty of privacy. This expertly designed home features a private gated driveway and an elaborate security system that includes night vision color cameras. Solar panels have been strategically placed to maximize energy efficiency. The spectacular landscaping is further enhanced with a sophisticated lighting package with a multi-zoned sprinkler system to further complete this home paradise.

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MANSION

RELATIVE VALUES

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL FOR HOME BUYERS

Three homes on the market in New York and Oklahoma that were once schoolhouses

**\$329,000**

Concord, N.Y.

Three bedrooms, two bathrooms

This 2,253-square-foot home, a former schoolhouse, retains some of its original features but was recently updated. The large basement once served as the school's gym. The home, which sits on a 1.8-acre corner lot, has a metal roof, a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace that runs through two levels and original hardwood floors throughout. Sale includes a 1,450-square-foot outbuilding. Agent: Melissa Frank, Metro Kirsch Real Estate

**\$299,999**

Sapulpa, Okla.

Three bedrooms, two full bathrooms, one half-bath

Built in the 1930s, the Blue Bell Elementary School, just southwest of Tulsa, was in session until the 1970s. Now a 3,933-square-foot home, the property retains much of its original character, including hardwood floors, exposed brick walls and a stage. The owners updated the roof and made other upgrades to the home, which sits on 1.6 acres. Agent: Jake and Sarah Salyer, Keller Williams Preferred

**\$499,999**

Barryville, N.Y.

Two bedrooms, 2½ bathrooms

This 2,500-square-foot home was once the Hillside School. Built in 1893, the one-room schoolhouse was later a chapel and a bed and breakfast. The home has original clapboard siding, slate chalkboards, hardwood floors and a bell tower with a cast-iron bell. A staircase leads to two en suite bedrooms on the renovated second floor. The property is 90 miles from New York City. Agent: Chuck Petersheim, Lazy Meadows Realty —*Stacey Altherr*

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Real Estate Trends



More Than Sports and Sales

How will you observe Labor Day? Take the day off and head to a lake? Beat the heat in a pool? Maybe you'll stroll a sandy beach — to savor the last moments of summer — or go to the mall or some local shops, to take advantage of the abundance of holiday sales. Maybe you'll just take it easy at home.

In this great land of ours, the possibilities are endless.

But we can never forget why the first Monday in September is called Labor Day.

"Without labor, nothing prospers," reasoned the Greek philosopher Sophocles, and I wholeheartedly agree. Labor Day in the United States traces its roots to a picnic held in September of 1882, attended by 10,000 New Yorkers. It was designed to recognize local union workers for their contributions. Soon, similar celebrations were popping up all over the country and, in 1894, President Grover Cleveland declared it our national workers' holiday. The response was overwhelmingly positive. Labor unions in cities such as Boston, Nashville, and St. Louis celebrated with parades and picnics. Large turnouts in Baltimore and Chicago — a whopping

30,000 there — underscored the holiday's popularity.

Today, Labor Day now also indicates, for many, the beginning of the school year — and the start of a new schedule of exciting fall football games ahead. (Guess who I'm rooting for.)

Oh, and it is also the traditional beginning of the seasonal moratorium on white shoes and clothes — if you subscribe to that sort of thing.

Whatever it means to you, and whatever your plans, one thing is for sure: Labor Day is a cherished American tradition, dedicated to our country's hardworking labor force — a small way to spotlight its unique skills, countless contributions and unbelievable success stories.

I hope you'll join me on Monday and salute the dedicated workers who put their special brand of elbow grease — and hearts and souls — into America each and every day.


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