

Russia renews U.S. adoption licenses

Seven adoption agencies based in USA reopen door for Americans hoping to adopt Russian children after the country implemented tougher rules 2A

Money: Insurer targets health results

Tests for weight, smoking, blood pressure and cholesterol part of new plan from United Healthcare 1-2B
Heat wave puts spotlight on homeowners getting disconnected by utility companies 3B

Sports: Penguin's Crosby staying

NHL scoring sensation Sidney Crosby gets five-year, \$43.5M contract extension with Pittsburgh 1-8C

Life: A big year for 'ginormous'

Made-up word becomes official in upcoming Merriam-Webster collegiate dictionary. Will language purists give it the "smackdown"? 3D

By John O. Buckley

Dow takes biggest dip in two weeks

Index	Close	Change
Dow Jones industrial average	13,501.70	▲ 148.27
Nasdaq composite	2,639.16	▲ 30.86
Treasury note, 10-year yield	5.02%	▲ 0.13
USA TODAY Internet 50	154.92	▲ 1.48

Sources: USA TODAY research, MarketWatch.com

USA TODAY Snapshots®

Active year for tornadoes

Number of tornadoes in each of the first six months of this year compared with the past three years' average for each month



Source: National Weather Service

By Mercedes Iversley and Sam Ward, USA TODAY

28 Crossword, Sudoku 9D
Editorial/Opinion 12-13X
Letters 3C
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State-by-state 6A
Market scoreboard 4B

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American League 5, National League 4: Mariners outfielder Ichiro Suzuki is greeted by the Tigers' Ivan Rodriguez and the Angels' Vladimir Guerrero after an inside-the-park home run. Suzuki was named the game's MVP.

As Bush exits, his issues will linger

The vexing agenda the president will leave behind in 2009 is likely to guide the administration of his successor. Among the unfinished business: the war in Iraq, tax cuts, Medicare and Social Security

By Susan Page
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The 44th president will move into the Oval Office with an agenda defined in large part by the 43rd president.

In many ways, it will be George W. Bush's third term.

Among pressing issues left on the table: What's next in Iraq. How to restore America's reputation around the world. Whether to extend tax cuts that expire in 2010. What to do about Medicare's looming shortfall. And how to complete the job of helping the Gulf Coast recover from Hurricane Katrina.

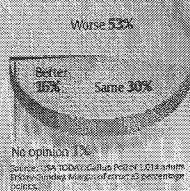
No new president gets a clean slate — global politics and the economy don't run in neat four-year cycles — but presidential scholars say the unfinished business Bush will leave for his successor is unprecedented since at least World War II.

"I can't think of a single modern president about to bequeath to his successor such a difficult agenda and such a damaged presidency," says Paul Light of New York University.

Presidential candidates from both parties, including some who promise a sharp break from Bush's policies, say that reality has influenced how they campaign and constrained what they propose.

USA TODAY Poll

What Americans say conditions will be like when the next president takes office, compared with what other new presidents have faced:



Source: USA TODAY/Gallup Poll. Q1: What conditions will be like when the next president takes office? Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding.

By Mike Shiner, USA TODAY

Cover story



By Charles Dwyer, USA TODAY

Legacy: Scholars say the unfinished business Bush will leave for his successor is unprecedented since at least World War II.

By Mary Beth Maize and Clair Lorell
USA TODAY

A growing number of states are cutting co-funding for recent veterans in a show of gratitude for some cases to fill gaps in the federal GI Bill. Most of the state laws honor veterans for their service, some also address disparities between members of the regular military — Army Marines and Air Force — and of National Guard troops, over whom states have jurisdiction.

Until 9/11, National Guard units were rarely deployed to combat zones or for long periods of time. Since then, about 240,000 Guard members, many of them college students, have been called up.

"The National Guard has been mobilized in a way that no one anticipated," says Texas state Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, president of the National Conference of State Legislatures. "So yes, (state legislation) is bubbling up."

The number of states offering a tuition break to recent veterans has more than tripled, from 11 in 1991 to 35 in 2007. Five states passed laws this year. In the pipeline, bills are in the pipeline. In Illinois, a bill for full tuition for veterans in Illinois to a tuition-free program for Guard and Reserve members mobilized for six months. They typically must attend a state and meet residency and academic requirements. Nearly every state today also offers tuition breaks for Guard members who attend college while in the service. Many also offer members of the Reserve.

Congress has tinkered with federal laws, and several Senate proposals would expand benefits even more. But University of Kansas senior Dem Parker, 25, a Marine who served two tours in Iraq, says states have some responsibility because rapidly rising tuition and higher education budgets contribute to the problem.

"If you want (to get) a four-year education bill, you're going to have to go in debt or wait time," says Parker, who helped craft a bill that led to a \$250,000 scholarship fund for Kansas. But as states face tight budgets, lawmakers with where to draw the line.

In Wisconsin, where a 100% travel tax cut last month, some lawmakers want to pare back a wait list of 49 applicants on a wait list for an exhausting \$500,000 scholarship budget. Last year, Wisconsin enacted only one proposal, providing a fee waiver to National Guard members but not to other veterans.

Contributing: Heather Collura, Marissa DeCicco, Ben Jones, The Post-Crescent in Appleton, Wis.

GI Bill benefits

Full-time service members get up to \$37,500 (noting \$12,000 they may use to pay for tuition; it can be used for 10 years after leaving the military).

National Guard Reserve get \$11,000 (with increased service days or more); used only while Guard and Reserve.

Inequities

What G.I. Reserve faces in states

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