

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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State of the Nation

18% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction while 73% say it is on the wrong track. (NBC/WSJ 7/9-13/16) The ABC/WP and CBS/NYT surveys taken at roughly the same time are slightly more optimistic with right direction scores of 28% and 26% respectively.

Let's take a look at the "official" unemployment numbers.

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for June 2016 is 4.9%, up from 4.7% last month.

If one takes into account the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the current rate is 9.6%. [BLS data is based on those 16 years of age and older.]

The unemployment rate for adult women and men was 4.5%; 4.4% for whites, 8.6% for blacks, 3.5% for Asians, and 5.8% for Hispanics.

In the first week of July, Gallup found an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.3%. It also found an under-employment rate of 13.3% (unemployed + those working part-time but wanting full-time). [This is based on those 18 years of age and older.]

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11 million U.S renters spent at least half of their paycheck on rent in 2014. [CNN Money]

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In 2014 there were 55.3 million Hispanics in the United States. This compares to 14.8 million Hispanics in 1980. The following represent the share of eligible voters who are Hispanic in key states. Florida – 20%, Nevada – 18%, Colorado – 15%, North Carolina – 5%, Pennsylvania – 5%, Virginia – 5%, Michigan – 3% and Ohio – 2%. [Pew Hispanic Center – WSJ 7/12]

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56% of Americans believe that immigration helps the United States more than it hurts it. 35% have the opposite view. [NBC/WSJ 7/13]

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People in the U.S. go to the emergency room more than you might think. 20% of people in the U.S. head to the ER at least once each year, according to new numbers out from the CDC. That translates to about 131 million ER visits a year, 11% of which result in a patient being admitted to the hospital. Visits in the five most populous states — New York, California, Florida, Texas, and Illinois — accounted for 36% of all ER visits nationwide. [STAT, 6/24/16]

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74% of Americans think that race relations in the United States are either fairly or very bad. This is the highest number found in the eleven times this question has been asked since 1994. Among whites, 75% think race relations are very or fairly bad and among African Americans the fairly/very bad number is 76%. 70% of Hispanics share the fairly/very bad view. [NBC/WSJ 7/13]

64% of registered voters believe that a solution will eventually be worked out. 33% think race will always be a problem. African Americans are less optimistic with 50% believing it will always be a problem. [NBC/WSJ 7/13]

32% of Americans think that too little has been made of the problems facing racial minorities in this country. 30% say that too much has been made of these problems. The final third of people believe that the right amount of attention has been paid to these problems.[NYT/CBS 7/12]

The pessimism expressed in the two surveys noted above is reinforced by the finding in the WP/ABC survey (7/14) that 63% of respondents believe that race relations in this country are generally bad. 72% of African Americans share this view as do 63% of white Americans.

The following are excerpts from a Washington Post story published at the same time that the above survey was reported.

“While there is agreement that race relations are deteriorating, the common ground ends there, according to follow-up interviews with those who took part in

the survey. There is no gathering consensus on how to solve the issue or who is to blame.”

“The feelings of unease about race are layered over a series of concerns, including a presidential campaign that has been viewed as racially divisive and alarm among traditional civil rights groups about the erosion of laws passed in the civil rights era to eliminate discrimination.”

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34% of us say it is a lot more difficult to be black in this country than it is to be white. Another 36% say it is a little more difficult to be black in this country. A total of 85% of blacks (65%, a lot)(20%, a little) say it is more difficult to be black in this country. [Pew Research Center 7/5]

Black federal district judges “are overturned on appeal 10% more often than white judges.” [NPR]

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49% believe that the condition of the economy is very/fairly good but only 24% think it is getting better. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

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46% say that the future of the next generation of Americans will be worse off than today. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

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59% of us say that in today’s economy, “just a few people at the top have a chance to get ahead.” 38% believe that anyone can get ahead. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

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71% of registered voters are very/fairly angry about the way things are going in the country today. [CNN/ORC 7/24]

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80% feel “mostly safe” when they describe their “feelings about the police in their community”. This view is shared by 85% of whites but only 53% of blacks. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

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In 2015, women made 83% of what their male counterparts made. The gap is even larger among black and Hispanic women. Asian men made 117% more than white men. Two-thirds of black respondents said “black people receive harsher treatment than white in the workplace. [Pew Research Center 7/1]

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In a 2014 survey, 86% of the public at large and 93% of married women with children think that politicians do not know what it is like to live a day in their shoes. 79% feel their voices are not heard effectively and 61% believe that the next generation will not have the same quality of life that they had. [Winston Group 6/24]

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Who is Poor In The United States

By: Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, Lauren Bauer and Ryan Nunn
(Brookings, 6/17/16)

The following are excerpts from this article.

46.7 million Americans—14.8 percent of the population...lived in poverty in 2014.

- More than a third of those who live in poverty are children. More than 15.5 million children lived in poverty in 2014.
- About 13 percent of those living in poverty are senior citizens or retired.
- A quarter of those who live in poverty are in the labor force—that is, working or seeking employment.
- A tenth of those in poverty are disabled.
- Eight percent of those living in poverty are caregivers, meaning that they report caring for children or family.
- Students, either full- or part-time, make up another seven percent of those living in poverty.

- Just three percent of those living in poverty are working-age adults who do not fall into one of these categories—that is, they are not in the labor force, not disabled, and not a student, caregiver, or retired.

Just over half of those who live in poverty are of working-age, defined as between the ages of 18 and 64.

- 13 percent are full-time, year-round workers, meaning that they usually worked 35 hours or more per week for at least 50 weeks during 2014.
- Just over one quarter of poor working-age adults work less than full-time year-round, meaning that they worked during the previous year, but not on a full-time, full-year schedule.
- 5 percent report that they are seeking employment – a classification that means that these adults were in the labor force – throughout the year.

The remaining 55 percent of working-age adults are not in the labor force.

- 18 percent—a third of the non-workers living in poverty—are disabled.
- 26 percent—just under half of non-workers—are caregivers or students.
- 6 percent are retired, though it is important to note that only the working-age population is considered here, so this constitutes early retirement.
- 5 percent of the total population of working-age adults in poverty are not in the labor force and are neither disabled, a caregiver, a student, nor retired.

Though 13 percent of working-age adults living in poverty are working full-time year-round, about twice as many were employed less than full-time year-round in 2014.

About 40 percent of those working part-time during the year are involuntarily part-time – meaning that they would like to work full time but cannot due to an economic reason such as inability to find a full-time job, employer reduction of hours, or slack work. Just under half of part-time workers were students, caregivers, or disabled. Only about 1 in 6 of these part-time workers worked fewer than 35 hours a week or less than 50 weeks a year for some other reason.

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WW has not previously recommended the entirety of an article but I encourage you to read "How American Politics Went Insane" in the July/August 2016 issue of The Atlantic, by Jonathan Rauch. The following are a few excerpts:

“Yes, the political future I’ve described is unreal. But it is also a linear extrapolation of several trends on vivid display right now. Astonishingly, the 2016 Republican presidential race has been dominated by a candidate who is not, in any meaningful sense, a Republican. According to registration records, since 1987 Donald Trump has been a Republican, then an independent, then a Democrat, then a Republican, then “I do not wish to enroll in a party,” then a Republican; he has donated to both parties; he has shown loyalty to and affinity for neither. The second-place candidate, Republican Senator Ted Cruz, built his brand by tearing down his party; slurring the Senate Republican leader, railing against the Republican establishment, and closing the government as a career move.”

“The Republicans’ noisy breakdown has been echoed eerily, albeit less loudly, on the Democratic side, where, after the early primaries, one of the two remaining contestants for the nomination was not, in any meaningful sense, a Democrat. Senator Bernie Sanders was an independent who switched to nominal Democratic affiliation on the day he filed for the New Hampshire primary, only three months before that election. He surged into second place by winning independents while losing Democrats. If it had been up to Democrats to choose their party’s nominee, Sanders’s bid would have collapsed after Super Tuesday. In their various ways, Trump, Cruz, and Sanders are demonstrating a new principle: The political parties no longer have either intelligible boundaries or enforceable norms, and, as a result, renegade political behavior pays.”

“And here is the still bigger point: The very term *party leaders* has become an anachronism. Although Capitol Hill and the campaign trail are miles apart, the breakdown in order in both places reflects the underlying reality that there no longer *is* any such thing as a party leader. There are only individual actors, pursuing their own political interests and ideological missions willy-nilly, like excited gas molecules in an overheated balloon.”

“Chaos syndrome is a chronic decline in the political system’s capacity for self- organization. It begins with the weakening of the institutions and brokers—political parties, career politicians, and congressional leaders and committees—that have historically held politicians accountable to one another and prevented everyone in the system from pursuing naked self-interest all the time. As these intermediaries’ influence fades, politicians, activists, and voters all become more individualistic and unaccountable. The system atomizes. Chaos becomes the new normal—both in campaigns and in the government itself.”

The full article can be found here:

www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/07/howamericanpoliticswentinsane

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The following are excerpts from a Charlie Cook National Journal Column as published in the Cook Political Report 6/27/16.

“This race is about shifts in the electorate that have prompted voters to behave in ways they never have before.”

“Both of our two major political parties are becoming far more ideological than they were in the past. The Democratic Party, once center-left, is now emphatically Left. The Republican Party, historically center-right is now emphatically Right.”

“The economy has changed just as dramatically. Globalization, automation, productivity gains and technological advances, among other things, created new winners and losers almost overnight. The losers were often people who had skills that served them well in the 20th century but had fewer applications in the 21st century. The people left behind are scared and angry. Many of them are working-class voters without college degrees, and they form the backbone of the Trump movement.”

“The fight over immigration is partly related to jobs and the economy. But it also reflects a split between people who embrace multiculturalism and see

immigration as freshening the lifeblood of the country, and other people who are uncomfortable with the new arrivals and feel our culture is under siege.

“At the same time, the political culture wars have heated up. Abortion, guns, gay marriage, and bathroom policies at schools have created deep emotional cleavages in the country. The opposing camps are so entrenched that compromise seems impossible.

“The quirky personalities who have walked on stage during this campaign season often blind us to the societal unease we are experiencing. It would be a mistake to focus on the strengths and weaknesses of various candidates without recognizing the underlying forces at work—and trying to figure out where they might lead.”

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Breaking Government Gridlock: America’s Birthday Challenge

The following are excerpts from a piece written by Peter Hart and Dan McGinn.

“The story of America is the story of hope over despair and unity over division. Countless political, social and economic disruptions have threatened to divide the nation and destroy our remarkable system of government. But Americans have always persevered.”

“First, the public has lost faith in the core institutions upon which our government and our economy are based”

“Second, the shift in the political system away from populism and greater participation, which defined much of the 20th century, toward the commanding influence of Super PACs, billionaire operatives and ultra-influential special interests, has undermined the essence of our representative democracy.”

“Third, the disappearance of competitive congressional districts should alarm everyone who believes in the importance of a government that is respected and valued.”

“The consequence of these three forces is gridlock, declining trust and a yearning among the general public for something radical to shake up the system.”

“If both parties remain fixed on an all-or-nothing approach, ‘We the People’ will see to it that the system is radically changed”

Confidence in Institutions		
	<u>2016</u>	<u>1986</u>
	Great Deal/Quite a Lot (%)	Great Deal/Quite a Lot (%)
Military	73	63
Church	41	57
U.S. Sup Ct	36	54
Public Schools	30	49
Banks	27	49
Newspapers	20	37
Big Business	18	28
Congress	9	41

[Gallup]

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“In a survey for Congressional Institute earlier this year, we found that eight out of ten (79%) voters feel that their voices are not effectively heard. This belief cuts across almost every demographic group: • 84% of Republicans • 80% of Independents • 74% of Democrats • 87% of conservative Republicans • 68% of African-Americans • 82% of Hispanics • 85% of conservatives • 76% of moderates • 77% of liberals • 79% of men • 80% of women”

[Winston Group 7/22]

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This and That: Did You Know?

A “juffy” is the scientific name for 1/100th of a second.

A 10 gallon hat will only hold ¾ of a gallon.

Penguins are not found in the North Pole. They live in the southern hemisphere.

It's not just a tiger's fur that is striped but also its skin.

Multiply 111,111 x 111,111. What do you get? 12345654321

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Remember the dust up over the role of the Super Delegates in the Democratic primary process? Well, the platform fight leading up to the convention is likely to result in a change.

After a protracted debate during the platform committee deliberations, a "unity commission" will be created with one of its goals being to review the role of the Super Delegates well before the 2020 election.

It sounds like members of Congress, governors and distinguished party leaders will remain "unpledged and free to support their nominee of choice." The balance of the super delegates will be "apportioned and required to cast their vote at the convention in proportion to the vote received by each candidate in their state."

Further, it appears likely that participation in the primaries or caucuses will be broadened as to who may participate. [Washington Post, 7/23]

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President Obama

"No matter what you think of his time in office, it's hard to argue that the human being (Barack Obama) has been anything less than a model of class and dignity."

-Walter F. Mondale

The public's grading of President Obama's job approval, as found by Gallup on 7/19/16, is 49% approval/47% disapproval. Obama's approval rating at the time of his first inauguration was 67% approval/14% disapproval. A year ago it was 47% approval/47% disapproval. [Gallup]

The following are other approval/disapproval scores going back 3+ years.

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN/ORC</u>	<u>NYT/CBS</u>	<u>FOX</u>
July 2016	51/46%	52/46%	xxx	53/41%	xxx
June 2016	51/45%	54/43%	52/45%	43/37%(CBS)	42/39%
May 2016	51/46%	47/51%	51/46%	50/43%	48/49%
Apr. 2016	49%/48%	xxx	xxx	46/45%(CBS)	49/47%
Mar. 2016	49/46%	51/43%	51/46%	48/44%	48/46%
Feb. 2016	49/46%	xxx	50/46%	47/45%(CBS)	49/47%
Jan. 2016	47/49%	50/46%	47/49%	46/47%	42/53%
Jan. 2015	46/48%	47/48%	xxx	xxx	45/51%
Jan. 2014	43/51%	45/52%	45/51%	46/47(CBS)	42/53%
Jan. 2013	52/44%	55/41%	55/43%	51/41%	

Approval Disapproval (in final year in office)

Clinton	59	37	(7/16/00)
Reagan	54	36	(7/18/88)
Eisenhower	49	33	(7/21/60)
<u>Obama</u>	49	47	(7/19/16)
G W Bush	31	61	(7/13/08)

49% disapprove of the way in which Obama is handling foreign policy.
50% approve of the way in which Obama is handling the economy.

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2016 Election

Only 15% of Americans approve of the way in which Congress is handling its job. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

The House

[The WW relies on the Cook Political Report for the congressional data below.]

Currently, the Democrats stand to pick up a net 10 to 15 seats. However, the prospect of taking back enough seats to get control of the House is not in the cards.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	188
Republicans	246
Vacancy	1

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Safe in 2016	177	202
Likely	6	13
Lean	6	11
	<u>Tossup</u>	
	3	17

The Senate

Today it appears that Democrats are likely to pick up three seats: Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. The Democrats need two additional seats to regain control of the Senate. It is also possible, however, that the Democrats could take control by winning only one more seat. This would create a tie. If Hillary Clinton is elected President her Vice President also serves as President of the Senate and becomes the tie breaking vote.

Bernie Sanders is now listed as a Democrat, leaving one Independent in the Senate.

THE U.S. SENATE

Republicans	54
Democrats	45
Independents	1

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Seats not up in 2016	36	30
Safe in 2016	8	11
Leaning in 2016	1	6
	Bennet	Blunt
		Burr
		Grassley
		Isakson
		McCain
		Murkowski
Total:	45	47

Toss Up

Nevada	Johnson
	Florida
	Ayotte
	Portman
	Toomey
	Kirk
	Indiana

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The Contest for President

Hilary Clinton has become the first woman to be the presidential nominee of a major political party.

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This presidential campaign is about two visions of America. The first is one in which nothing works and everyone in power is incompetent and has done nothing right. The second concedes that there is much to be done but that this is a country with a system that has worked before and will work again.

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“Anybody who doesn’t think the race will be close is kidding themselves. With the two most intensely disliked presidential nominees in American history, neither can win big. Both candidates have a low ceiling because their negatives are so high, and a high floor because their rival’s negatives are so high as well. If they were stocks, analysts would say that they have narrow trading ranges. The race will likely hinge on a half-dozen or more states that may be determined by just a percentage point or two. Any race that close can obviously go either way. I still think there are many more factors giving Clinton the edge, notably the electoral college, demographic trends, a superior campaign, and vastly more financial resources. Even so, the race is apt to go down to the wire.” [Charlie Cook, 7/18/16]

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During the course of the primary campaign, 61% of Republicans switched their support at least once. Of this group 36% switched their support once. 25% switched their support twice. 34% supported the same candidate throughout. 5% remained undecided.

1% of GOP voters named trump as their first choice in March 2015.

27% of GOP voters named trump as their first choice in August 2015.

34% of GOP voters named trump as their first choice in December 2015.

44% of GOP voters named Trump as their first choice in April 2016.

88% of GOP voters named Trump as their first choice in General election.

[Pew Research Center American Trends Panel surveys]

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43% of Democrats and 40% of Republicans are very/fairly satisfied with the presidential candidates. This is the lowest level of satisfaction by either party since 1996.[Pew Research Center 7/7]

46% of Americans prefer that a Democrat be elected president while 41% prefer that a Republican be elected. [NBC/WSJ 7/12]

50% say that Clinton is prepared for the job as president while 30% say that Trump is prepared for the job. [NYT/CBS 7/12]

41% of registered voters think that Hillary Clinton would be better at dealing with racial problems between police and African Americans. 57% of African Americans also believe that about Clinton.

19% of registered voters think that Donald Trump would be better at dealing with racial problems between police and African Americans. 5% of African Americans also believe that about Donald Trump. [NBC/WSJ 7/13]

An important part of the attraction of Donald Trump is that he gives voice to things that many people believe but hesitate to say out loud.

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Ohio has voted for the winning presidential candidate in 28 of the past 30 elections, dating back to 1896 (the exceptions were 1944 and 1960). That's the best "winning percentage" of any state over that timeframe. Additionally, the state has deviated on average only about two points from the national two-party voting over

the same period, making its voting more reflective of the national average than any other state. [The Bellwether: Why Ohio Picks the President by Kyle Kondik]

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The Democratic candidate for President has won--at least in the last six presidential elections (1992-2012)--in 18 states and the District of Columbia for a total of 242 electoral votes. The Republican candidate for President has won -at least the last six presidential elections--in 13 states for a total of 102 electoral votes. [Cook Political Report]

The July 1st NBC battleground map
shows the following:

Likely Dem	200 Electoral votes
Lean Dem	<u>55</u> Electoral votes
	255 Electoral votes

Likely GOP	144 Electoral votes
Lean GOP	<u>46</u> Electoral votes
	190 Electoral votes
Tossups	95

Real Clear Politics 7/22
shows the following:

Hillary Clinton	209 EV
Tossups	165 EV
Donald Trump	164 EV

Sabato's Crystal Ball 7/22
shows the following:

Safe Dem	190 EV	Safe GOP	136 EV
Likely Dem	50 EV	Likely GOP	27 EV
Lean Dem	<u>107 EV</u>	Lean GOP	<u>28 EV</u>
	347 EV		191 EV
Tossups	0		

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Three of the Democratic candidates for vice-president of the United States since 1964 have some connection to Minnesota. Hubert Humphrey was born in South Dakota but moved to Minnesota and was elected from there to the U.S. Senate. Walter Mondale was born in Minnesota and elected from there to the U.S. Senate. Tim Kaine was born in St. Paul, Minnesota and elected to the Senate from Virginia. (Courtesy Jim Johnson)

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Senator Tim Kaine, Clinton's choice as her running mate, is known as a person who does not let his personal beliefs interfere with his support of the rule of law. While he opposes the death penalty, many individuals were put to death while he was governor. While he is personally pro-life he has spoken of his respect for the right of a woman to make her own choices. He is a perfect fit for Clinton.

Governor Mike Pence, Trump's choice as his running mate, is known for his ties to the Republican base, particularly social conservatives. He has an A rating from the National Rifle Association and a 100% rating from the American Conservative Union. His time in the U.S. House of Representatives and his popularity in the Republican caucus makes him a perfect emissary for Trump's agenda if he is elected President.

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Selected polls, July 2016

	CBS/NYT 7/8-7/12	NBC/WSJ 7/9-7/13	ABC/WP 7/11-7/14	CNN/ORC 7/13-7/16	NBC/Survey Monkey 7/11-7/17
Clinton	40	46	47	49	46
Trump	40	41	43	42	45
Spread	Tie	Clinton +5	Clinton +4	Clinton +7	Clinton +1

	NBC/Survey Monkey 7/18-7/24	CNN/ORC 7/22-7/24	CBS News 7/22-7/24	Economist/YouGov 7/23-7/24
Clinton	46	45	43	47
Trump	45	48	44	42
Spread	Clinton +1	Trump +3	Trump +1	Clinton +5

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The Money Game – How much was raised? (OpenSecrets)

Clinton Campaign Committee: \$264,400,00 / Outside groups: \$110,200,000

Sanders Campaign Committee: \$227,700,000 / Outside groups: \$869,400

Trump Campaign Committee*: \$89,000,000 / Outside groups: \$7,200,000
* 47,500,000 loans received

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2016 General Election Debates

The schedule of debates previously announced by the nonpartisan, nonprofit Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) has been changed. Wright University of Ohio, which was scheduled to host the first presidential debate, has withdrawn apparently because of the financial cost of hosting the debate. It has been replaced by Hofstra University. Hofstra had agreed to be the alternative last year. This will be the 3rd consecutive presidential election in which Hofstra has hosted a presidential debate.

The open question is whether Trump will decide not to participate in all three presidential debates.

First Presidential Debate:

Monday, September 26, 2016

Hofstra University

Long Island, Hempstead, NY

Vice Presidential Debate:

Tuesday, October 4, 2016

Longwood University, Farmville, VA

Second Presidential Debate:

Sunday, October 9, 2016

Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Third Presidential Debate:

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

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The Washington Watch relies on the following sources of political data:
Cook Political Report; Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report; Sabato's Crystal

Ball; Ballotpedia; Real Clear Politics.com; The Green Papers.com; HuffPost – Pollster.com and Polling Report.com.

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RESTAURANTS

CAPE COD

CAFÉ RIVERVIEW

451 Route 6A

Sandwich, MA

508-833-8365

Open 7 Days A Week

6:30AM – 2:30PM

(Summer Hours)

Debbie introduced me to Café Riverview when we were in East Sandwich on Cape Cod. The café opened several years ago. As you would guess by its hours, they serve breakfast and lunch as well as a variety of pastries and non-alcoholic drinks.

The cafés is managed and run by the students from the Riverview school. Café Riverview is Riverview School’s hands-on-classroom. Students who are interested in food service often work at Café Riverview where they learn about restaurant operations and how to prepare food and serve the public.

Café Riverview is a very popular destination in Sandwich and the students thrive on being a vital part of its success. Many of the students who work at the Café ultimately find work in the food service industry. (See note at end of this review.)

Inside there are six seats at a counter and twenty-five seats with tables in a dining area. In good/warm weather there is seating for sixteen on the front porch.

There are a wide variety of customers of all ages from the local and folks who may be passing through.

Breakfasts include a variety of choices ranging from Spicy Burritos to a Morning View Breakfast Sandwich of sliced ham, egg, cheddar cheese and caramelized onion on a toasted Portuguese muffin. There is also Oatmeal with Wheat Berries and Hot Quinoa with Almonds. They also offer a number of Egg and Cheese Sandwiches with additions ranging from Baby Spinach to Chives.

As lunch time approaches there a number of sandwiches and salads. The sandwiches range from Cape Cod Cranberry Chicken Salad to a Chicken Pesto Ciabatta. The salads range from a Caprese Salad to Asian Chicken with Almonds.

From the beginning the question was whether the café would sustain itself financially or would it require a continuing stipend. The café is now financially self-sustaining.

There is a unisex bathroom.

If you are on the Cape give it a try.

Note: Riverview School, an independent coeducational boarding/day school, provides a caring community for students ages 11-22 with complex language, learning and cognitive challenges. The School is committed to developing student competence in academic, social and independent living skills.

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Pain D'Avignon
Boulangerie
15 Hinckley RD3
Hyannis, MA
508-778-8588

Breakfast: Daily, 8am – 11 am
Lunch: Daily, 11am – 3 pm
Dinner: Wednesday – Sunday, 5pm – 10 pm

My first visit to Pain D'Avignon was with Phil at lunchtime. I ordered a smoked sea bass salad. It came with a very large piece of sea bass and greens. It was excellent. Phil had eaten earlier so he settled for coffee. (I am looking for a location that sells smoked seabass.)

As you enter the café, just ahead and slightly to the left is the counter where you place your order or buy one of the variety of breads and pastries that the café offers.

There are a variety of seating options. There is a bar with 10 high stools which serves as an alcohol bar and also a food eating option.

In the area near the ordering station there are 14 seats at tables of two and four, plus one table of six. In the area across from regular/alcohol bar, there are tall round tables with two high stools at each. In the third section of the restaurant there are 30 regular seats in tables of two, four or six. Thus there are sixty-eight seats inside and another twenty- four seats at six tables of four on an outdoor patio.

Hot items are delivered to your table.

There are a variety of in-house baked sweets from pies to cookies. Included are a number of oatmeal-based cookies with additions like chocolate chips, cranberries and oranges.

Debbie, Chris and I went there for breakfast the next day as well. Debbie ordered a stuffed croissant. Chris ordered an omelet called Croque Monsieur/Croque Madame with Black Forest ham, Gruyere & two local eggs baked on country bread served open faced. This dish was oversized to say the least and it was shared by Debbie. I ordered the omelet of the day containing a variety of vegetables including onions, tomatoes, plankton and other veggies. I was not able to finish it because of its size.

The menu is substantial. For breakfast, it includes seven main courses--including banana Nutella crepes--and a variety of sides, pastries and breads. For lunch, there are six soups and salads, five sandwiches and five entrée-like dishes.

The dinner menu consists of seven main courses--including grilled Spanish octopus--nine soups and other appetizers including grilled Spanish octopus; four salads, eight other entrée like dishes and various accompaniments. And of course each day there are a number of specials.

The portions are quite large.

This restaurant goes on my list of must stops on my next trip to Hyannis.

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WASHINGTON DC

kinship
1015 7th Street NW
Washington, DC
202-737-7700
Open at 6:30 p.m. nightly

Debbie, Gwen and I went to kinship on a Thursday night.

As you enter, to the left is a bar area that includes a long bar with ten high stools and four booths. It is particularly well lighted in a decorative way.

To the right is the dining area. There are a variety of tables including twos, fours and then combinations of the twos to provide for tables of six the night we were there. There is no particular reason that a table of eight could not be created. At the back of the dining room is a long bench as seating for four tables of two.

Friends who had previously been to the restaurant recommended the Roast Chicken but said you have to order it as soon as you sit down because it takes quite a while.

The menu has a section which is described as “For the Table”. There are five options in this section including the Kinship Roast Chicken. The serving person told us it would take 60-80 minutes so we did order it. Another section has a series of what I would call small plates. Our serving person suggested that for the three of us we should order 4 small plates to share. She said that by the time we finished those offerings the chicken would likely be ready.

We first chose Maine Lobster French Toast, Chesapeake Bay Softshell Crab, Tongue Salmis and Soused Pied De Chochon. One of us was drawn to the latter by the fact that the description referenced Globe Artichokes. Happily we asked the server exactly what the dish included and found that the main ingredient was pig’s feet. We decided instead to order the Pan Seared Lamb Ribeye.

True to her word, by the time we finished the small plates the roast chicken was ready. It is first brought to the table as a complete chicken and then returned to the kitchen to be carved. It was as good as our friends had suggested.

When we go again, assuming the same number of people in our party, we would probably order one less small plate. We were quite full when we tackled the chicken. (The balance of the chicken will make the main course for another meal.)

For dessert we selected Triple Crème Chiboust which combines spice-roasted cherries, black walnut crumble and black cherry Sorbet, and Cookie Dough Soufflé. Debbie said on our next visit she wants to try the Rhubarb Brown Betty which we will do.

We had heard from one of our friends that the service was lacking. We did not find that to be the case. The service was exceptional and the serving people who interacted with us were particularly friendly.

There are three restrooms side by side. First is a restroom that is shown as handicapped accessible for men. Second in the line is a restroom that is clearly available for men or women and finally a restroom that is labeled handicapped accessible for women.

The three restrooms are quite similar except the handicapped accessible rooms have a series of special wall bars. Each of the restrooms has a single white ceramic commode, a single square washbasin in a black ceramic counter. The floor is covered with whitish marbled tiles with black diamond at the corner of each tile. The walls are covered with white wooden floor to ceiling panels.

The reality is that either men or women could use any of the three restrooms since they are designed to be locked when in use.

There is valet parking.

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Sweetgreen
The Ultimate Salad Bar
Various locations in California, District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts,
Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia.
The Sweetgreen website allows you to access the location closest to you.
The location WW visited is located at
2200 Wisconsin Ave, NW

202-333-4307

You can order for pickup or choose to take out your salad.

I visited Sweetgreen for the first time with Nancy and Whitney. As you enter, the salad bar is directly ahead with various standards creating a line to the point at which you interact with one of the folks who prepares your salad.

Each salad is created for you as you order it. You can either order one of the salads on the wall board behind the counter or simply ask the server to include whatever items fit your fancy.

Whitney and I ordered the Harvest Bowl which includes organic wild rice, shredded kale, apples, sweet potatoes, roasted chicken, local goat cheese, toasted almonds, with selected amounts of balsamic vinaigrette. (705 calories)

Nancy ordered the Kale Caesar which includes shredded kale, chopped romaine, parmesan crisp, share parmesan, roasted chicken, tomatoes, fresh lime squeeze and Caesar dressing.

There are a number of seating options. There are tables for two or four people and small high top tables at which you sit on a high stool.

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RPM Italian
601 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC
202-204-4480
RPMRestaurants.com

RPM Italian opened in Washington on June 29, 2016. The original RPM Italian is located in Chicago, Illinois. It is the newest entry to the major eatery class in Washington.

Debbie and I went there with Whitney and Lee on a Saturday night.

At approximately 12,000 square feet, it is quite a space.

As you enter there is a reception desk straight ahead. To the right of the reception desk is a large area with an equally large bar with various seating options around the room. When we were last there, on July 16th the bar was packed.

To the immediate left is a private glass-walled room that seats up to twelve at a single table. Directly to the left is a very large room. Down the middle, for the length of the room there are two back to back cushioned benches with tables and chairs facing the benches on each side. They can be configured as two tops or four tops. Around the ends there are a number of four tops. To the left and right are a series of four five-person booths. At the end of the room is a substantial service bar.

Beyond this room and up a few steps is another large dining room filled with tables of various sizes. In total, the restaurant can seat 300 people, 330 people in a crunch.

The extensive menu, which like most other Washington restaurants, is available online. As an aside, I always try to look at the online menu before going to any new restaurant. I usually have some idea of what I am going to order before I arrive but I often change my mind.

On this evening we decided to start with a round of starters with each of us picking one or more, followed by four main courses selected the same way. We started with Tomatoes & Watermelon, Tuscan Kale Salad, RPM Caesar Wedge, and Zucchini Fritti.

For the main courses we selected Pappardelle Bolognese (Hand-Cut Pasta, Short Rib Ragu), Brick Chicken (Tuscan Pole Bean Ragu), Picatta Moderno (Thinly Pounded Chicken with a Parmesan Crust), and Lobster Fra Diavolo (Angel Hair Spaghetti, Spicy Pepperoncini).

And then came dessert. Lee and I ordered and primarily ate what we chose, Bill's Chocolate Budino (Salted Caramel, Cocoa Nibs) and Sicilian Cannoli (Vanilla, Pistachio).

The service was as good as it gets. Our server was very helpful in assisting us in making selections. Those who delivered the dishes to us wore earpieces so the kitchen can let them know when particular dishes are available to be served.

Of course the men's room is quite fresh. As you enter there are two square wash basins side by side in a marble top with a mirror above. There are two long wall hung urinals with a wall between them. There are two commode rooms. One is standard size and the other much larger for those who need additional room.

The open question is whether RPM Steak, another Chicago-based restaurant, will be opened in D.C. Stay tuned.

There is valet parking.

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Tico
1926 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009
202-319-1400
info@ticodc.com

Debbie and I went to Tico with Judy, Roland, Madeline and Emma.

As you enter the restaurant, to the right is a long traditional bar with a dozen high top chairs. Across from the bar is a high table with high chairs that seats ten. At the far end of the room is a large open kitchen that has a six person eating bar toward the right. The rest of the room, and another room to the left, has seating for twos, fours, sixes and tens.

We were first seated in a far corner of the room to the left next to a long table of younger diners who were a bit noisy, as if having a party. Roland asked if we might be moved to a location that was a bit quieter and the restaurant quickly accommodated us.

Everyone pitched in with their suggestions of what we should order. The service was attentive and quick. Here is a list of what we ordered, mostly small portions. Scallops; Black Bass Ceviche; Crispy Manchego Cheese; Spicy Shrimp & Lobster; Sweet Corn; Tender Lamb Meatballs; St. Louis Ribs; Crispy Calamari; Tico's Mac & Cheese; Crunchy Fried Chicken Taco; Smoked Beef Tongue; Sausage and Peppers and Peach and Beet Salad.

The crowd in the restaurant is on the younger side and even at the table to which we moved it was relatively noisy. On the other hand, the food was fun and I look forward to going there again.

The men's room is pretty standard. As you enter there are two oval washbasins in a black marble top with a large mirror above the washbasins. The

floor is covered with midsize tan tiles. The walls are solid red. There is a single wall hanging urinal next to a single commode room that is open at top and bottom.

Mike

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