

BUSINESS

Perspective: Gov. Ned Lamont needs to get Democrats to step up and make the tough vote for tolls, but he lacks the political levers to make it happen, Editorial Page Editor Paul Choiniere writes. **B3**

When are the best times to shop? We'll tell you. **Page B2**

Clickety clack, let's look back: Typewriters return

A younger generation is discovering the joy of the feel and sound of the typewriter.

Gramercy Typewriter Co. in New York, which sells vintage typewriters, all in working condition. Vintage typewriters are sent for repair and restoration daily from around the country, the owner says.

KATHERINE ROTH VIA AP



By KATHERINE ROTH
Associated Press

For most of us, the clickety clack of a manual typewriter — or the gentler tapping of the IBM Selectric — are but memories, or something seen only in movies.

But at the few remaining typewriter repair shops in the country, business is booming as a younger generation discovers the joy of the feel and sound of the typewriter — and older generations admit they never fell out of love with it.

“What’s surprising to me is that the younger generation is taking a liking to typewriters again,” says Paul Schweitzer, 80, owner and operator of the Gramercy Typewriter Co., founded by his father in 1932. He now works alongside his son, Jay Schweitzer, 50, and — this summer — a grandson, Jake.

Vintage typewriters are sent for repair and restoration daily from around the country, Schweitzer says. Demand is so great that early this year, the family finally opened their own store, in New York City. Other surviving shops include Berkeley Typewriter and California Typewriter, both in Berkeley, Calif., and also founded in the 1930s.

Gramercy sold dozens of old typewriters over the holiday season, Schweitzer says.

Two recent documentaries,

“The Typewriter (In The 21st Century)” (2012) and “California Typewriter” (2016), featuring collector Tom Hanks, have helped popularize vintage typewriters among young people, who also have a soft spot for other analog technologies like vinyl records and fountain pens.

At one time, Schweitzer says, there were six pages of typewriter repair listings in the New York City phone book (which also hardly exists anymore).

Schweitzer, who also services HP laser printers, still packs up his leather typewriter-repair bag and heads out on jobs at offices around the city, seeing to sticky keys and shredded ribbons. But these days, he sees to just a handful of typewriters in any given office, as opposed to years ago, when he visited offices with as many as 700 typewriters, one at each desk.

“A lot of law firms and accounting firms still have typewriters in their offices. They have computers, too, but there are always times when typewriters come in handy,” he says. They are convenient for smaller jobs, like addressing envelopes, and there are times you just want something done quickly and in triplicate.

Ellen Lupton, senior curator in contemporary design at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, which has an array of typewriters in its



PHOTOS BY JULIA RUBIN/AP

A teenage visitor uses a typewriter on display at the American Writers Museum in Chicago. Below, a working Smith-Corona typewriter from the 1950s, for sale at the Gramercy Typewriter Co. in New York.



collection, says, “There’s an irresistible tactility to typing on a typewriter, a satisfying sound, a feeling of authentic authorship. No one can spy on

you and there are no distractions,” she says.

She notes that typewriters’ legacy can be seen in smart phone and computer

keyboards.

The “shift” key, for instance, was originally meant to literally shift the position of a typewriter key, to a capital letter from a lower-case one. The return key (or lever, on manual typewriters) originally returned the carriage into position for the next line.

“And we’re still stuck with the QWERTY keyboard — even on phones — which was supposedly designed to prevent keys from sticking together when someone is typing quickly,” Lupton says.

While early typewriters of the late 19th century were designed purely for function, “by the ‘20s and ‘30s they’d become quite stylish,” Lupton says.

“We have quite a few very stylish Italian typewriters in our collection. They’re very chic, with wonderful geometry and unusual lines. Olivetti was a big producer of office equipment and they are really invested in design,” says Lupton. “Another reason for the appeal must surely be the beautiful and authentic appearance of a typewritten page.”

It’s common for typewriters to allow for typing in red and black, and to feature a “ribbon reverse” function to maximize use of the ink ribbon by running it in the opposite direction once it reaches the end of the spool.

And as with every tool, there are tricks to using a

typewriter. To save on the number of keys, there is generally no number “1” on older keyboards (a lower case “L” suffices), and to make an exclamation point, a period is simply topped with an apostrophe. (The “cent” key seems decidedly quaint today.)

The American Writers Museum, in Chicago, features a popular section with seven manual typewriters and an electric typewriter that visitors can try out.

“Typing for the first time is exciting, especially for younger people,” says Carey Cranston, president of the museum, which now features an exhibit with 16 typewriters used by famous writers like Jack London, Ernest Hemingway, Maya Angelou and John Lennon.

“With a pen or pencil you can distract yourself by doodling, and of course on a computer it’s easy to find distractions. But a typewriter was invented specifically for writing. There are no distractions. It’s just you and the page,” Cranston says.

Students who visited the museum on a field trip were so enamored with the typewriters that they started their own typewriter club, and Cranston says he’ll never forget the reaction of one fifth-grader discovering typewriters for the first time.

“Wow, this is great! It’s an instant printer!” he exclaimed.

ELECTRIC JAGUARS TO BE MADE IN U.K.

London — Jaguar Land Rover says it will manufacture a range of electric cars in the U.K., a boost to an industry braced for turmoil ahead of Britain’s departure from the European Union.

The all-electric version of the Jaguar XJ sedan will be made at the firm’s factory in Castle Bromwich, in central England. CEO Ralf Speth said the “future of mobility is electric,” and that the company is committed to making the next generation of zero-emission vehicles in the U.K.

The decision comes during a time of great anxiety for the auto industry in the U.K., which is struggling with uncertainties over Brexit as well as global issues buffeting the sector.

— Associated Press

UNIVISION MIGHT BE SHOPPING FOR A BUYER

San Francisco — A report says Spanish-language television network Univision could be considering a sale from its private equity owners.

Univision confirmed it is “reviewing strategic options” and has hired outside advisers after a report in The Wall Street Journal said it was looking at options, including potentially a sale. Univision competes with fellow Spanish-language network Telemundo in the U.S.

Private equity firm Saban Capital Group and other firms bought Univision in 2007. In 2016, Univision bought what was then known as Gawker Media, which included news sites Gizmodo and The Onion, for \$135 million in an attempt to bring in young readers.

— Associated Press

U.S. trade deficit rises to 5-month high of \$55.5B in May

Washington — The U.S. trade deficit rose to a five-month high in May as the politically sensitive imbalances with China and Mexico widened.

The Commerce Department said the gap between the goods and services the U.S. sells and what it buys from foreign countries rose 8.4% to \$55.5 billion in May, the highest since December. Exports increased 2% to \$210.6 billion on rising shipments of soybeans, aircraft and cars. But imports climbed more — 3.3% to \$266.2 billion — on an increase in crude oil and cellphones.

The deficit in the trade of goods with Mexico rose 18.1% to a record \$9.6 billion. The goods gap with China widened 12.2% to \$30.2 billion. President Donald Trump sees America’s trade deficits as a sign of weakness but hasn’t been able to reduce them.

— Associated Press



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP PHOTO

A cargo ship is docked at the Port of Los Angeles in Los Angeles. The Commerce Department said the U.S. trade gap rose to a five-month high in May.