

Sent: Wed, 22 Oct 2014 06:12:56 -0400

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Subject: Vice Presidential News Clips for Wednesday, October 22, 2014

[VPNewsClips141022.doc](#)

[VPNewsClips141022.pdf](#)

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF

DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014 -- 6:15 AM EDT

-----TODAY'S EDITION-----

BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

- + Experts Discuss Technology's Role In Future Of Transportation (WP)
- + More Prefer Public Transit To Road Building (ABCNEWS)
- + Joe Biden Reveals His 'Biggest Regret' (WASHEX)
- + Biden Closes His Amtrak Hours (NFV)
- + Vice President Touts New Detroit Buses, M-1 (DETN)
- + Vice President Joe Biden Visit Tied To Int'l Recognition Of The "The Duluth Model" (KBJRTV)
- + VP Joe Biden To Campaign For Schneider In Illinois (AP)
- + Bill Clinton Stumps For Quinn; Tells Workers To Look To Future (CHIST)
- + Vernon Hills Preparing For Vice President Joe Biden's Visit Wednesday (CHIDH)
- + Bill Clinton Campaigns With Quinn On Southwest Side (CHIT)
- + Biden: LaGuardia Staff Thanked Me for Telling Truth About Airport (NBCNEWS)
- + Biden Screws Up De Blasio's Vision Zero Plan (NYPOST)
- + We're Depending On Cuomo To Fix JFK, LaGuardia (NSDY)
- + Biden Plays Stand-Up, And The Joke's On Him (NYT)
- + Where There's Trouble, You'll Usually Find Joe Biden (DAYBEST)
- + 'White Boy' Biden Got It Right And Wrong About The Tea Party (HUFFPOST)
- + Backlash Against Leon Panetta, Robert Gates Over Memoirs (CQRC)
- + Obama's Day: Cabinet Members (USAT)
- + Now Driving The Straight Talk Express: Senator Carper Of Delaware (BLOOMCD)
- + The Hunter Biden Chronicles (NTRVW)
- + Women In The World Texas Brings Big Names To San Antonio (KSATTV)

NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

- + Alison Lundergan Grimes, Kay Hagan And Other Candidates Avoid Obama (NYT)
- + HBO And CBS Move Toward Selling Content Directly To Consumers (NYT)
- + Some Good News On The Ebola Front (NYT)
- + Inequality In Hong Kong (NYT)
- + The Upside Of Lower Oil Prices (NYT)
- + Capitalism's Suffocating Music (NYT)
- + The Building Blocks Of A Good Pre-K (NYT)
- + Putin And The Pope (NYT)
- + (Only) Two Rules For A Good Diet (NYT)
- + Would Stronger Parties Mean Less Polarization? (NYT)
- + A Nuclear Deal, Now Or Never (NYT)
- + Russia Today, Argentina Tomorrow (NYT)
- + Brazilians Are Shocked, Shocked At Corruption! (NYT)
- + The Dirty Effects Of Mountaintop Removal Mining (WP)
- + On Marijuana Legalization Plans, The District Should Slow Down (WP)
- + How Ben Bradlee Transformed The Washington Post (WP)
- + Ben Bradlee, A Hero To The Post Newsroom (WP)
- + Ben Bradlee Was A Leader And A Friend (WP)
- + Bears And Wolves Find A Voice In The Wilderness (WP)
- + A Small Organization Offers A Fresh Approach On Preventing Terrorism (WP)
- + A Call To Action From 'Patient Zero' Monica Lewinsky (WP)
- + Meet The One Democrat Who Is Not Running From Obama (WP)

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

- + Racial Parity Will Transform Delaware By 2060 (WILNJ)
- + Odor-plagued Compost Plant Ordered To Shut Down (WILNJ)
- + Delaware Businesses Stockpile Road Salt (WILNJ)
- + Del. Treasurer Race Gets Personal (WILNJ)
- + Top 9 Projects That Need Funding (WILNJ)
- + Rodel Report Pushes Personalized Learning (WILNJ)
- + Time For Some Reasons To Feel #delaproud (WILNJ)

WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS:

- + What Delawareans Need To Know About Ebola (WILNJ)
 - + An End To The Stench Could Finally Mean Fresh Air (WILNJ)
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BIDEN IN THE NEWS:

EXPERTS DISCUSS TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION (WP)

By Ashley Halsey

Washington Post, October 21, 2014

Ask a transportation expert what America needs right now and you'll get a fairly simple answer: better roads and bridges, enhanced public transit and improved rail lines, ports and airports. Ask a transportation expert how Americans will get from place to place in 20 years, and often the answer is a lot less certain.

If that seems like a disconnect - surely what we need today will be in use for a couple of decades - there is a one-word explanation for the quiver in experts' voices when they talk about transportation's future:

Technology.

It has revolutionized transportation just as it has forever changed most other aspects of life, and in the years to come it promises to take transportation to a dozen forks in the road.

That was one aspect made clear at a wide-ranging conference of transportation experts brought

together in downtown Washington on Tuesday by The Washington Post. The conference attendees heard from mayors, past and present U.S. secretaries of transportation, Vice President Biden and a bevy of fellow experts, most with their own vision of the future. The central theme for most was the critical importance of investing in the nation's tattered infrastructure to keep the United States competitive in the global market. Finding the funding to do that as revenue from the traditional gas tax dwindles was a subset of that conversation, with several suggesting a move to a mileage-based fee or tolling on interstate highways. When it comes to a vision for the future that lies just over the horizon, there were many ideas tossed out that made certainty a bit elusive. Technology has spread so rapidly through virtually all modes of transportation that the challenge is in determining how it will continue to transform the future. At few times in history has the pace of change come so quickly.

Questions that arose - without firm answers - from the presentations Tuesday included:

- **If autonomous vehicles - driverless cars - are just over the horizon, will drivers who no longer drive still need insurance? Or will vehicles and their manufacturers be covered by product-liability policies?**
- **Will highways of the future need things such as road signs or guardrails, since the cars know where they are going and will stay between the white lines?**
- **If electric cars are a major part of the future - Tesla was represented at the conference - will there still be a need for a gas station every few blocks?**
- **With autonomous cars able to toddle off and park themselves, will there be a need for vast acres of underground parking garages in downtown areas such as the District's where land is at a premium?**
- **When the last parking meters wear out and disappear, and cars begin to park themselves and pay for the space electronically, will parking tickets become a thing of the past? And what will replace the ticket revenue that cities have come to count on?**
- **Will public transit be less popular when autonomous cars can deliver their passengers that "last mile" from the transit stop to the front door?**
- **Will magnetic levitation trains running through tunnels deep underground carry passengers at 300 mph?**
- **And will cars fly?**

A prototype of a flying car sat on 14th Street NW outside the conference.

"Hopefully we can use these technologies we've talked about here at the conference and change some things," said flying-car developer Carl Dietrich, head of Terrafugia, whose Web site says that it "intends to lead the creation of a new flying car industry."

In an allusion to the prospect that packages may be delivered to homes by unmanned drones, Dietrich asked: "How many years will it take of seeing your packages flying above you before we say, 'Hey, we could be up there?' "

MORE PREFER PUBLIC TRANSIT TO ROAD BUILDING (ABCNEWS)

By Ryan Struyk

ABC News, October 22, 2014

Americans in an ABC News/Washington Post poll favor expanded public transportation options over road building in government efforts to reduce traffic congestion. But where they live makes a difference.

Overall, 54 percent prefer focusing on public transit, such as trains and buses, while four in ten say the government should focus on expanding and building roads instead. Preference for public transit, though, ranges from 61 percent of urban residents to 52 percent of suburbanites and 49 percent of people in rural areas.

See PDF with full results here.

The results come as Vice President Joe Biden and six mayors from major U.S. cities are scheduled to attend a Washington Post forum today on relieving traffic congestion.

There are other differences among groups. Preference for a focus on public transit peaks at two in three liberals and six in ten college graduates, as well as among nonwhites, people under age 40,

those in the top income category, \$100,000-plus, and political independents. Other groups have a slight preference for road building: strong conservatives, evangelical white Protestants and white men without a college degree.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 4-7, 2014, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell phone-only respondents. Results have a 3.5 point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York.

JOE BIDEN REVEALS HIS 'BIGGEST REGRET' (WASHEX)

By T. Becket Adams

Washington Examiner, October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden said Tuesday that he regrets that several states with Republican governors rejected the billions of taxpayer dollars set aside by the economic stimulus bill of 2009 for high-speed rail and that most of the money went to California.

"My biggest regret was I got the president to put billions of dollars into the Recovery Act for high-speed rail," Biden said during a speech addressing transportation and infrastructure spending. Gov. Rick Scott, R-Fla., "turned ... back" the funds, the vice president added. "He now wants it back, but he turned it back."

Gov. John Kasich, R-Ohio, also "turned it back."

But Gov. Jerry Brown, D-Calif.?

"He took it all," Biden said, prompting laughter from his audience.

"And guess what?" the vice president added during his speech at an event hosted by the Washington Post. "Watch what's going to happen in the next four years you're going to see a high-speed rail system going directly from [Los Angeles] to Las Vegas, carrying hundreds of thousands of passengers."

The future of the high-speed rail project linking Vegas to L.A. remains in doubt.

BIDEN CLOCKS HIS AMTRAK HOURS (NFV)

By Micah Reynolds

North Fork (NY) Vue, October 22, 2014

During a speech on commuter issues, Vice President Biden estimates that he has made roughly 8,000 round-trips on Amtrak.

"Biden clocks his Amtrak hours" is categorized as "us".

VICE PRESIDENT TOUTS NEW DETROIT BUSES, M-1 (DETN)

By David Shepardson

Detroit News, October 21, 2014

Washington - Vice President Joe Biden touted Detroit's M-1 rail system and the Transportation Department's award of funds for 50 new buses for the Motor City.

"Detroit's getting off its back. It's on its knees. It's about to stand up," Biden said at a forum on commuting sponsored by the Washington Post at a local theater. He praised Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan as a "great mayor. ... I'm serious - a really can-do guy."

Biden also suggested self-driving cars may be in place faster than many experts have predicted. Last month, the U.S. Transportation Department announced it was awarding the city \$25.9 million to buy as many as 50 new hybrid and clean diesel buses that will ease overcrowding, reduce wait times, and provide more accessible and reliable service where 35 percent of the people live below the poverty line. They will replace aging vehicles that have been "plagued by maintenance issues, resulting in better on-time service, as well as reduced carbon emissions," the department said. It marked the second boost from Washington in less than a year for the city's beleaguered bus system. In December, the Federal Transit Administration approved \$41.6 million to overhaul 60 buses, improve facilities and acquire security equipment.

The Transportation Department said 60 percent of Detroiters don't have access to a car. "They rely on buses," Biden said. "They don't have enough buses so we just arranged for" funding for more buses.

"What does mean? It means people can keep the few jobs they have out there. They don't show up late. They are actually able to be on time. ... It means a working mom doesn't have to take two

buses that take two hours to get to work."

He also praised the M-1 rail system "going right through the center of town."

"The point is that it matters. Transportation and convenient transportation, efficient transportation matter to how people can live their lives," Biden said.

Biden also praised Google Inc. for working on self-driving cars and Tesla Motors Inc. for building electric vehicles.

"Tesla - I shouldn't say Tesla because I'm going to be accused of promoting a brand. But here's the deal: They are about to put a car on the market that goes 0 to 60 in 3.2 seconds," Biden said referring a new souped-up version of the Model S that the automaker unveiled earlier this month. "Google's working to develop self-driving cars, which I predict will be around in the next four or five years. The possibilities are immense."

Self-driving cars could save lives and improve productivity, Biden said. "It's gigantic," he said.

Duggan won permission in January from Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr to hire a new bus director, after he saw buses running behind schedule while residents waited in subzero temperatures. Duggan had been pushing the Obama administration for bus funding and spoke with Biden about it.

Also last month, the Transportation Department awarded a \$12.2 million federal grant to help finish the 3.31-mile M-1 streetcar project.

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VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN VISIT TIED TO INT'L RECOGNITION OF THE "THE DULUTH MODEL" (KBJRTV)

By Kevin Jacobsen

KBJR-TV Duluth (MN), October 22, 2014

Duluth, MN (NNCNOW.com) - Vice President Joe Biden is expected to personally congratulate Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, or DAIP, on its recent international recognition of "The Duluth Model" during his visit to Duluth on Thursday.

Just last week, the World Future Council named "The Duluth Model" as the world's best policy, honoring it with the 2014 gold Future Policy Award during an event in Geneva, Switzerland.

"The Duluth Model" is a groundbreaking domestic violence policy created in the early 1980s by the late Ellen Pence.

October is also Domestic Violence Awareness month.

The Vice President will also head to Hibbing on Thursday where he will be lending political support to Representative Rick Nolan, who is seeking reelection to the 8th Congressional District.

Written by Kevin Jacobsen

VP JOE BIDEN TO CAMPAIGN FOR SCHNEIDER IN ILLINOIS (AP)

Associated Press, October 22, 2014

VERNON HILLS, Ill. (AP) - Vice President Joe Biden is expected to attend a rally in support of Democratic U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider.

Schneider is in a race with Republican Bob Dold in Illinois' 10th congressional district. Schneider's campaign says the vice president will headline an early voter rally on Wednesday afternoon at a community center in the suburb of Vernon Hills.

Biden is one of many political heavy weights who have visited Illinois in recent days to campaign for Democratic candidates. President Barack Obama was in Chicago on Sunday to help Gov. Pat Quinn in his campaign against GOP challenger Bruce Rauner (ROW-nur). Quinn campaigned Tuesday with former President Bill Clinton.

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BILL CLINTON STUMPS FOR QUINN; TELLS WORKERS TO LOOK TO FUTURE (CHIST)

By Natasha Korecki

Chicago Sun-Times, October 22, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton landed in Chicago on Tuesday, becoming the latest in a steady stream of star-studded pols to stump for Gov. Pat Quinn's re-election.

With U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Quinn at his side at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, Clinton defended Quinn's tenure as governor.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about: More jobs, higher incomes, better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities," Clinton told a crowd of hard-hat wearing workers at the steel pipe and tube manufacturing plant. "The rest is all background music."

Clinton worked to dispel thoughts that this election was a referendum on President Barack Obama as well as convince the crowd that a vote for Quinn was a vote for the future.

"When he took office, things were in a terrible mess . . . There were no easy answers," Clinton said of Quinn. "We had the worst crash since the Depression. . . . Don't be pessimistic about the future, and don't let your neighbors be."

Clinton's arrival came one day after Obama's departure. While here, Obama headed a 6,200-person rally at Chicago State University, then pushed for early voting on Monday. Vice President Joe Biden is on deck for Wednesday. First lady Michelle Obama as well as Hillary Clinton also have come through town for Quinn.

Republican Bruce Rauner, meanwhile, was pushing early voting in Henry, Tazewell and Winnebago counties. Rauner also tapped starpower as well: New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who appeared with Rauner at a campaign stop in Rockford.

Christie, also the chair of the Republican Governors Association, has visited Illinois numerous times to campaign for Rauner and on Tuesday was grabbing headlines complaining about the Democrats' use of the minimum wage as a campaign tactic.

Meanwhile, Rauner's campaign has a different take on the state's record of job creation.

"When it comes to jobs, Illinois continues to lag behind its neighbors with one of the lowest growth rates in the Midwest," Rauner spokesman Mike Schrimpf said in an emailed statement.

But new numbers released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show Illinois had the second best job growth in the nation. Last month, Illinois added nearly 20,000 jobs.

"Illinois has seen the nation's sharpest decline in unemployment over the last year, and our unemployment rate is at its lowest point in more than six years," Quinn's statement said.

Rauner and Quinn are locked in a tight election battle for the governor's mansion. The election is Nov. 4.

VERNON HILLS PREPARING FOR VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN'S VISIT WEDNESDAY (CHIDH)

By Russell Lissau

Chicago Daily Herald, October 21, 2014

The Vernon Hills Park District facility will be closed for the day and scheduled programs have been canceled. Additionally, motorists should expect corresponding delays and detours in the area.

As campaign workers, district staffers and others prepare for the event, the Sullivan Center has been a flurry of activity. U.S. flags and other decorations are being added to the decor, a stage is being built and barricades will be erected.

Park district Executive Director Jeff Fougrousse sounded excited about Biden's visit.

"When you can bring the vice president of the United States into our park district facility, that's a special moment for us," he said.

Doors will open to the public at 1 p.m., and things are expected to get underway about 1:30 p.m.

The Sullivan Center was chosen for Biden's visit because it's in the 10th Congressional District, where Democratic incumbent Brad Schneider is running a close race with Republican rival Robert Dold.

Schneider's campaign committee is covering the \$500 rental cost, said Jay Bullman, the center's facility supervisor. The contract was signed Oct. 14, Fougrousse said, and planning began in earnest a few days later.

Biden and Schneider will be joined by U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, who's also seeking re-election, and by Paul Vallas, who's running for lieutenant governor with Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn as his running mate.

Durbin's challenger is Republican Jim Oberweis. Quinn is running against the GOP's Bruce Rauner.

At the Sullivan Center, a preschool program, some dance classes, and a rhythmic gymnastics class previously set for Wednesday have been canceled. An after-school program will be relocated, too.

The dozen or so full-time employees who otherwise would be scheduled to work at the center won't have vacation days, Fougousse said.

"They're still going to work, just at different locations," he said. "It's not a paid holiday for staff."

Biden's visit isn't causing any other significant disruptions in town, officials said.

Vernon Hills police are involved with traffic control coordination. The Secret Service will handle Biden's transportation, officials said.

Motorists should expect delays or detours in the area, police said.

Village employees aren't involved in any other aspects of the rally.

"It's a private event," Village Manager John Kalmar said.

When President Obama made a speech at Evanston's Northwestern University this month, university and city officials had much more to do.

"It's a much more overwhelming event when the sitting president comes to your campus,"

Northwestern spokesman Al Cabbage said.

University leaders had about 10 days to prepare. Cabbage and key staffers met daily to discuss security, facilities issues and other matters.

For example, three rows of seats in the rear of the Cahn Auditorium needed to be removed so risers could be installed for media crews. A temporary floor was built over the theater's orchestra pit, too.

"It was a lot of work," Cabbage said.

The Sullivan center has hosted political bigwigs before. In March 2012, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney had a rally there.

BILL CLINTON CAMPAIGNS WITH QUINN ON SOUTHWEST SIDE (CHIT)

Chicago Tribune, October 20, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton made his pitch for Gov. Pat Quinn to several hundred hardhat-wearing workers Tuesday, saying the Democratic governor inherited an economic mess and has worked hard to grow jobs.

Clinton campaigned with Quinn at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, while Republican challenger Bruce Rauner plans an afternoon early voting rally with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in Rockford. The two major Illinois governor candidates are kicking off the final, frenzied two weeks of campaigning before the Nov. 4 election with the help of some political star power this week. Clinton said people should ignore the attack ads in the race with Republican challenger Bruce Rauner and instead focus on which candidate will be best for their future, noting that outside Illinois the election is being billed by Republicans as a referendum against President Barack Obama.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about," Clinton said. "We need more jobs, higher incomes. Better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities."

"I am telling you, Pat Quinn deserves to be re-elected governor of Illinois," Clinton said. "When he took office things were in a terrible mess, and the governor can't print money, unlike Washington. And there were no easy answers."

Clinton alluded to the vast amounts of money being spent on the governor's race and referenced Quinn's difficult political position of running for re-election while promising to make a temporary income-tax increase permanent.

"It's election season, people are trying to sell you something. It's been my experience, and you think about this, when somebody's trying to make a sale and they want me to stop thinking, they probably don't have my best interest at heart," Clinton said. "If they trust me to disagree with them, even if I do, I might buy whatever it is they're selling because they trusted me, because I don't think they're trying to pull a scam. That's basically what the politics of this election is about."

"When you reach a certain age, you are a lot more concerned about younger people. About the future," Clinton said, mentioning his new granddaughter. "And I am here to support (U.S. Sen.)

Dick Durbin and Pat Quinn because they are about the future."

Clinton's visit come on the heels of President Barack Obama's return to Chicago to stump for Quinn. He headlined a rally Sunday at Chicago State University to mark the start of early voting, then cast his ballot Monday. First lady Michelle Obama and former Secretary of State and possible presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton helped raise money for Quinn earlier this month. Christie, meanwhile, has been a frequent sight on the campaign trail with Rauner, hosting several fundraisers and shaking hands at restaurants across the state.

The parade of political celebrities visiting Illinois demonstrates what's at stake: Republicans see a way in after years of Democratic control, while Democrats are going all-out to prevent the potential embarrassment of losing the governor's mansion in Obama's home state.

On Wednesday, Vice President Joe Biden is scheduled to appear at an early voting rally with Quinn running mate Paul Vallas, Durbin and U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider at the Sullivan Community Center in Vernon Hills. Durbin faces Republican state Sen. Jim Oberweis, and Schneider has a rematch against former Republican U.S. Rep. Robert Dold.

Quinn and Rauner hit the campaign trail following the final televised debate Monday night in which the two unleashed negativity on each other for most of an hour. Quinn decried "savage cuts" in a Rauner budget, while the Republican challenger repeatedly branded the Democratic chief executive a "phony" and a "failure."

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BIDEN: LAGUARDIA STAFF THANKED ME FOR TELLING TRUTH ABOUT AIRPORT (NBCNEWS)

NBC News, October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden says workers at LaGuardia Airport thanked him for comments he made earlier this year where he compared the structure to a "third world country."

BIDEN SCREWS UP DE BLASIO'S VISION ZERO PLAN (NYPOST)

New York Post, October 22, 2014

Joe Biden should get his Vision checked.

The gaffe-prone vice president reversed the words of Mayor de Blasio's signature "Vision Zero" traffic-safety plan, before catching the mistake and correcting himself during a press conference at Vaughn College in Queens on Monday about improving the region's airports.

Biden was mentioning a \$130 million federal grant to projects such as the proposed Moynihan train station in Manhattan when he veered off to praise "the mayor's zero vision, uh, Vision Zero plan to limit traffic accidents."

Biden has a reputation for putting his foot in his mouth.

During a visit to Philadelphia in February, he compared La Guardia Airport to airfields in Third World countries.

"If I blindfolded you and took you to La Guardia Airport in New York, you must think, 'I must be in some Third World country.' I'm not joking," he said back then.

On Monday, Biden quipped in Queens that his next landing at the airport was fretful.

"After I made that comment, about three weeks later, Air Force Two was landing at La Guardia and so my pilots all said, 'Oh, Lord, here we go. Do we need to put any Marines on board?'" Biden recalled.

Gov. Cuomo, who joined Biden at the event, couldn't resist returning to Biden's comment, asking audience members in his Power Point presentation to identify who uttered the La Guardia quip from a list that included Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Jay Leno and Donald Trump.

"The answer is D, none of the above," said Cuomo, adding that the culprit was Biden. "And he was right," Cuomo said.

During the event, Cuomo unveiled a plan to redesign both La Guardia and Kennedy airports, with new restaurants and shops in the terminals, more hotels, and access via high-speed ferries and improved rail service.

WE'RE DEPENDING ON CUOMO TO FIX JFK, LAGUARDIA (NSDY)

Newsday, October 22, 2014

With Vice President Joseph Biden at his side, Gov. Andrew Cuomo launched a welcome

competition this week for ideas to help veer LaGuardia Airport back into the first world - and to help stabilize Kennedy Airport within that realm.

You don't have to be a frequent flier to understand the problems. Evening travelers waiting to depart LaGuardia's central terminal have been known to quietly sip coffee while watching a lively local mouse population frolic.

Arriving fliers headed for Manhattan by cab can test their stamina by pushing forward heavy luggage - and as often as not tiny, sleep-deprived, howling children - while the minutes creep by as they wait for a taxi to roll up.

Cuomo admirably volunteered to tackle these problems last January, even though the Port Authority owns the airports. But now he owns this project.

The vice president's presence at Cuomo's side Monday was an especially deft touch. Biden is the one who spoke for most of us not long ago when he blurted out that LGA is "Third World."

JFK isn't quite so hellish, but it's a strong runner-up. The airport is officially 15 miles from midtown. But these are New York City miles, not normal miles. So the trip from the luggage carousel to your hotel room can chew up hours that feel like days.

The AirTrain from JFK to the Long Island Rail Road or to the subway lines in Queens helps - provided you're not packing like a sultan.

Still, New York is tough place to get into and out of. So now, with an election looming, Cuomo says the design competition will begin in a month. We hope he means business when he says he wants local airports that are more attractive and more efficient.

So what would we like to see now at LGA and JFK?

Better access. Start with high-speed water taxis from Manhattan to LGA and JFK. And add subway service - maybe via the N train - from midtown to LaGuardia.

And for the folks running LGA: Build a better mousetrap. Please. Mice at the departure gate just won't do it.

BIDEN PLAYS STAND-UP, AND THE JOKE'S ON HIM (NYT)

By Alex Thompson

New York Times, October 21, 2014

The comedian Jay Leno was honored with the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for American Humor this week, but it was Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. who beat the comics to the punchline with his own self-mocking monologue.

"No one ever doubts I mean what I say. The problem is, I sometimes say all that I mean," said the gaffe-prone Mr. Biden, speaking before an audience of comics and V.I.P.'s at the vice presidential residence. America is great, Mr. Biden continued, because "we're self-assured enough to laugh at ourselves."

"Matter of fact," he added. "I'm so damn self-assured I don't stop laughing."

The audience included Mr. Leno, Seth Myers, Wanda Sykes and Robert Klein.

Mr. Myers - who relies on the vice president's blunders on NBC's "Late Night" - drew laughs when he said Mr. Biden had an open invitation to visit his New York apartment "because technically he helped pay for it."

WHERE THERE'S TROUBLE, YOU'LL USUALLY FIND JOE BIDEN (DAYBEST)

By Lloyd Green

The Daily Beast, October 21, 2014

His crisis-creating remarks and his son's drug-related discharge from the Navy are just the beginning. This guy's a train wreck.

According to the polls, Joe Biden doesn't have a prayer in 2016. And according to former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Biden "has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades."

But two things are also certain: First, Biden is still Barack Obama's go-to-guy when partisan loyalty is at a premium. Faced with rising concern and criticism over the outbreak of Ebola, Obama tapped Ron Klain, Biden's former chief of staff, to be America's Ebola czar. Second, Biden's friends and family have not hesitated to profit from their ties to the vice president. Biden's brother, James, and his son, Hunter, have cashed in on the family name, whether it be in Iraq or Ukraine. Biden may have the mien of the crazy uncle in the basement, but he is also a real reminder of

what is wrong with politics.

Let's start with Klain. Like Biden, Klain is a consummate fixer, with Georgetown and Harvard Law School degrees thrown in for good measure. But for his political pedigree, Klain would have no business being Ebola coordinator. Ebola is not just another messaging problem.

Klain was the aide to Al Gore who was memorialized by Kevin Spacey in the HBO movie *Recount* as pushing for a more aggressive approach to, well, the 2000 Florida recount. Then, after failing in Florida, Klain became a Fannie Mae lobbyist who helped convince Congress and Fannie Mae's regulators that all was well with the world, even as Fannie Mae was inflating what would prove to be a catastrophic housing bubble.

And yet, Biden and Obama now seek to again unleash Klain on America. To be sure, Klain's public-health credentials are invisible, a fact that Obama himself has tacitly acknowledged. In announcing Klain's selection, Obama framed things this way: "Klain comes to the job with extensive experience in overseeing complex governmental operations and has good working relationships with leading members of Congress as well as senior administration officials." Not one word about Klain, medicine, and immunology.

In that sense, Klain is all too reminiscent of Harriet Miers, George W. Bush's White House counsel and his personal lawyer. Bush nominated Miers to the Supreme Court but was then compelled to pull her nomination after it became clear that Miers' loyalty to the president far exceeded her legal chops.

What prevented Miers from joining the court was the fact that she would have to run the gantlet of Senate confirmation, which is something that Klain, the Ebola czar, will not need to do. He is a creature of the White House, cloaked in executive privilege.

Ron Klain is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae.

Klain is not the first to crawl out of the swamp of Biden World on to the larger stage. He is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae; had his own ties to Biden; and worked in a job in which he was over his head. For the record, Donilon's brother, Mike, was Biden's counselor between 2009 and 2013. According to *The Nation*, "Fannie Mae paid Donilon, a longtime Democratic Party operative, \$15 million to lobby Congress to gut the power of government regulators." He was "a top executive at Fannie Mae during the period when cooking the books to increase executive compensation would later lead to a \$400 million fine."

More disturbingly, Donilon took center stage as national security adviser despite the fact that he was lightly regarded in national-security circles. In Bob Woodward's telling, Gen. Jim Jones, Donilon's predecessor at NSA, said to Donilon, "You have no credibility with the military.... you frequently pop off with absolute declarations about places you've never been, leaders you've never met, or colleagues you work with." Donilon was also Obama's guy while the president was laying out imaginary red lines to Syria.

But it's not just Biden placing loyalty over competence that makes him who he is, his tropism toward plagiarism, or even his tendency to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. It's Biden's willingness to turn a blind eye in the face of his family members trading on Biden's job as vice president for fun, profit, and disgrace that completes the picture.

Take Hunter Biden, the veep's younger son. Just last week, it was reported that the 44-year-old Hunter was discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine. But here's the thing. To get into the Navy, Hunter needed a separate waiver on account of his prior drug use. History does repeat itself.

And then there's that matter of Hunter and Ukraine. Back in May, Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private natural-gas producer, announced that Hunter had joined its board. To which the White House could only reply, "Hunter Biden and other members of the Biden family are obviously private citizens, and where they work does not reflect an endorsement by the administration or by the vice president or president."

And then there's James Biden, the vice president's brother, who made a go at winning public-housing contracts in Iraq. As reported in the waning days of the 2012 presidential campaign, after Joe became vice president, James joined New Jersey-based Hill International as its executive vice president.

So what? So this. Hill's business is managing construction projects in the Middle East and the

United States, and lo and behold, six months after James joined Hill in 2010, the company won a \$1.5 billion contract to build at least 100,000 affordable homes in Iraq. Talk about coincidence. Or not. According to published reports, the State Department, then run by Hillary Clinton, and the Iraqi government were instrumental in Hill winning the contract. Also at the time, Biden was Obama's point person on Iraq, and like Klain, who is no expert on public health, James Biden was no maven on public housing.

The White House may have contemplated dumping Joe Biden from the ticket. But that was then. These days, it is Biden who again finds himself at the center of all things Obama.

Even as the United States struggles to build a coalition against ISIS, it is Biden who tweaks Turkey, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, without appreciating the havoc that he would wreak, tweaks for which he would ultimately be forced to apologize. We have seen the diplomatic crises Biden can stir up. But sadly, it's hardly the worst of Biden's handiwork.

Lloyd Green was the opposition research counsel to the George H.W. Bush campaign in 1988, and served in the Department of Justice between 1990 and 1992.

'WHITE BOY' BIDEN GOT IT RIGHT AND WRONG ABOUT THE TEA PARTY (HUFFPOST)

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson

Huffington Post, October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe Biden got the tongues furiously wagging again after a recent meeting with black ministers in South Carolina. First he called himself the virtually lone "white boy" in a black Wilmington, Delaware neighborhood. Then he lambasted the tea party as "crazy." The reference to himself as the "white boy" was more amusing than anything else. Since Biden obviously took great relish in making the point to a mostly black gathering that he's one of them too and by extension so is the Democratic Party.

But it was his typecast of the tea party as a bunch of loons that was far more eye catching. He got it right and wrong about it. It's easy to sneer at, and even poke fun, at a party that, since it burst on the scene in the aftermath of President Obama's first presidential election win, some of its members have come off as a cross between a KKK Klavern and a PT Barnum clown circus act. After their first flush of growth, the party's slide in getting candidates elected and gaining more popular support has been relentlessly downhill. Polls repeatedly show that a majority of Americans look on the tea party with everything from disgust to indifference. Gallup poll numbers show that less than one in four Americans now back the party. But looks can be deceiving, and that's never truer than in politics, and this is where Biden got it wrong about the tea party.

The best guess is that of the two hundred plus House Republicans, less than half of them are there because of tea party support or are directly affiliated with the tea party. Yet this minority within the GOP controlled House has continually held the House and Congress hostage on everything from spending on all domestic programs to its dozens of obstructionist and showboat votes repealing the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, the Senate is regarded as the one sure firewall between the tea party-influenced, GOP-controlled House getting its way on legislation and its initiatives.

GOP Senate leaders have been careful to keep the tea party at arm's length and the various official GOP campaign committees have loudly made it clear that in the 2014 and the 2016 elections they will only bankroll GOP candidates who are electable. This means candidates who are sans the tea party stigma and odor. They have been as good as their word and now crow that the current crop of GOP contenders in the key Senate races have a better than fair shot at winning precisely because they are seen as sensible and electable.

This is much less it than it appears. The supposedly moderate GOP Senators have toed the tea party line in opposing tougher gun control provisions and immigration reform. And they have hammered away on spending cuts on everything from Head Start to food nutrition programs, and have torpedoed key Obama administration judicial and staff appointments.

At every step, they have cast a wary but congenial eye on the tea party. There's no mystery why. The 2014 midterm elections shape up to be a cliffhanger in the key battleground states between the GOP and Democrats, especially incumbent Democratic senators. The incessant media talk of a GOP tsunami in those states is just that - talk. The Democrats are rolling the dice hard in the key match-ups in those states and are spending the bank on their candidates. That makes the tea party even more vital to the GOP, shrunken numbers are not. It can make enough noise and in

some districts turn out sufficient numbers to make a difference in close contests. That's even more vital in swing districts with Democratic congresspersons who are on shaky ground with conservative voters.

The various polls that show the declining tea party fortunes have also noted that the tea party's backer's vehemence toward the Democratic Party is unrelenting. This presents yet another dilemma and opportunity for the GOP. With nowhere else for tea party adherents to go other than the GOP, this could open the gates wide again for more challenges from tea party backed candidates to GOP incumbents in 2014 and beyond. This perpetually puts GOP congresspersons in the disastrous position of having to continually look over their shoulders to see if there is a tea party candidate waiting in the wings to challenge if they do not tow the tea party line. They have turned this to their advantage by simply co-opting much of the tea party line on the issues without calling it that.

"White boy" Biden did not misspeak or engage in campaign ballyhoo to please black Democrats in South Carolina or anywhere else for that matter when he round-housed the tea party. The tea party's anti-Obama antics have brought them richly deserved public ridicule. But beyond the ridicule they're still very much a force to be reckoned with and the hostage taking success they've had and continue to have with the GOP is ample proof of that.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He is a frequent MSNBC contributor. He is an associate editor of New America Media. He is a weekly co-host of the Al Sharpton Show on American Urban Radio Network. He is the host of the weekly Hutchinson Report on KTYM 1460 AM Radio Los Angeles and KPFK-Radio and the Pacifica Network.

BACKLASH AGAINST LEON PANETTA, ROBERT GATES OVER MEMOIRS (CQRC)

By Tim Starks

Roll Call, October 22, 2014

President Obama's former Defense secretaries are coming under fire in light of their memoirs that criticize the commander-in-chief while he's still in office.

Retiring Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. said he doesn't plan to issue a critical tell-all memoir mid-presidency the way Leon E. Panetta did recently.

"I think what Leon said in the book is unfortunate. Frankly, I don't think it's something that a former Cabinet member should do while the president he served is still in office. That's not something that I would even consider doing," he told CNN in an interview that aired late Monday.

Holder isn't the only administration official to have scolded Panetta, but Vice President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.'s (@joebiden) declaration of his memoir as "inappropriate" was overshadowed by remarks he made that same day which preceded an apology to Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Arthur Cyr, a professor at Carthage College and senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, on Tuesday extended the criticism to Robert M. Gates, as well.

Gates' memoirs are especially significant. His career unfolded at the CIA, where he became the first director to rise through the ranks. His tenure as defense secretary spanned the two administrations of Barack Obama and George W. Bush, unprecedented bipartisan service. Gates became regarded as a dedicated public servant. His score-settling in print therefore was surprising.

...Gates' memoirs have helped the Republicans in partisan political terms. Likewise, Panetta's criticism of others, in particular President Obama, no doubt will assist the opposition. This is even more ironic, given his career as a Democratic Party spokesman and member of Congress.

OBAMA'S DAY: CABINET MEMBERS (USAT)

By David Jackson

USA Today, October 21, 2014

President Obama plans to spend Tuesday in meetings with Cabinet members from the Treasury and Pentagon.

In the late morning, Obama will discuss the U.S. economy with Treasury Secretary Jack Lew.

The late afternoon brings a presidential meeting with Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. One of the topics is likely to be the battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

In addition, Obama has his weekly lunch with Vice President Biden.

The president is also expected to receive updates from aides on efforts to contain the Ebola virus.
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NOW DRIVING THE STRAIGHT TALK EXPRESS: SENATOR CARPER OF DELAWARE (BLOOMCD)

By Senator Carper of Delaware Kathleen Hunter
Bloomberg, October 21, 2014

It's not common, particularly in campaign season, to hear straight talk from Washington politicians. But Senator Tom Carper, a Democrat, said what he meant - and meant what he said - in response to questions posed during a Bloomberg News event today in New York. Ebola

Asked about flaws in the U.S. response, he criticized his colleagues in Congress for using political "scare tactics."

"Some of my colleagues have been shameful in the way, frankly, they've manipulated this for purposes that I think we can all understand," he said. "The way people have just been playing the scare tactics is just, I think, shameful." "Boots on the Ground"

Asked if President Barack Obama was being disingenuous in promising not to put "boots on the ground" to combat IS, he agreed: the President may have gone too far.

"If you go back in time, you'll find that presidents in the past have not always been fulling forthcoming: Not just this president, but other presidents," he said. Carper cited George W. Bush, who he said was not completely honest with the American public for reasons that "are unexplainable and unforgivable."

"So this may be an indiscretion - it is minor compared to what his immediate predecessor engaged in," Carper said. Hunter Biden

Asked if getting discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine was an appropriate punishment for Vice President Joe Biden's son Hunter, Carper - a close friend of the Bidens and a former Navy reservist - did not try to play both sides.

"We have pretty bright lines in terms of what was acceptable and what was unacceptable," Carper said, growing visibly emotional. "And I think he was treated pretty much like anybody else would have been treated."

THE HUNTER BIDEN CHRONICLES (NTRLRVW)

By Michelle Malkin
National Review, October 22, 2014

Everything you need to know about Beltway nepotism, corporate cronyism, and corruption can be found in the biography of Robert Hunter Biden. Where are the Occupy Wall Street rabble-rousers and enemies of elitist privilege when you need them? Straining their neck muscles to look the other way.

The youngest son of Vice President Joe Biden made news last week after the Wall Street Journal revealed he had been booted from the Navy Reserve for cocaine use. His drug abuse was certainly no surprise to the Navy, which issued him a waiver for a previous drug offense before commissioning him as a public-affairs officer at the age of 43. The Navy also bent over backward a second time with an age waiver so he could secure the cushy part-time job.

Advertisement Papa Biden loves to tout his middle-class, "Average Joe" credentials. But rest assured, if his son had been Hunter Smith or Hunter Jones or Hunter Brown, the Navy's extraordinary dispensations would be all but unattainable. Oh, and if he had been Hunter Palin, the New York Times would be on its 50th front-page investigative report by now.

Despite the disgraceful ejection from our military, Hunter's Connecticut law license won't be subject to automatic review. Because, well, Biden.

Biden's bennies are not just one-offs. Skating by, flouting rules, and extracting favors are the story of Hunter's life.

Hunter's first job, acquired after Joe Biden won his 1996 Senate reelection bid in Delaware, was with MBNA. That's the credit-card conglomerate and top campaign donor that forked over nearly \$63,000 in bundled primary and general contributions from its employees to Senator Biden. As I've reported previously, Daddy Biden secured his custom-built, multimillion-dollar house in Delaware's ritziest Chateau Country neighborhood with the help of a leading MBNA corporate executive.

Average Joe went on to carry legislative water for MBNA in the Senate for years.

Hunter zoomed up to senior vice president by early 1998 and then scored a plum position in the Clinton administration's Commerce Department, specializing in "electronic commerce," before returning to MBNA three years later as a high-priced "consultant." While he collected those "consulting" (translation: nepotistic access-trading) fees, Hunter became a "founding partner" in the lobbying firm of Oldaker, Biden, and Belair in 2002.

William Oldaker was Papa Biden's former fundraiser, campaign treasurer, and general counsel - a Beltway barnacle whose Democratic-machine days dated back to Teddy Kennedy's 1980 presidential bid. Under Oldaker's tutelage, Hunter lobbied for drug companies, universities, and other deep-pocketed clients to the tune of nearly \$4 million billed to the company by 2007. Coincidentally, then-Illinois senator Barack Obama personally requested and secured cozy taxpayer-subsidized earmarks for several of Hunter's clients.

Hunter got himself appointed to multiple corporate board positions, including a directorship with Eudora Global. It's an investment firm founded by one Jeffrey Cooper, head of one of the biggest asbestos-litigation firms in the country. SimmonsCooper, based in Madison County, Ill., donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to Biden the Elder's various political campaigns over the past decade - all while the firm poured \$6.5 million into lobbying against a key tort-reform bill, which Biden worked hard to defeat. Cooper also contributed to the Delaware attorney-general campaign of Hunter's older brother, Beau, and paid Beau for legal work on lucrative asbestos-litigation cases.

Hunter also was previously a top official at Paradigm Global Advisors, a hedge-fund holding company founded with Vice President Biden's brother, James, and marketed by convicted finance fraudster Allen Stanford. As Paradigm chairman, Hunter oversaw half a billion dollars of client money invested in hedge funds while remaining a lobbyist at Oldaker, Biden, and Belair. Cooper chipped in \$2 million for the ill-fated venture, which went bust amid nasty fraud lawsuits. Continually failing upward, Hunter snagged a seat on the board of directors of taxpayer-subsidized, stimulus-inflated Amtrak, where he pretended not to be a lobbyist, but rather an "effective advocate" for the government railroad system serving the 1 percenters' D.C.-New York City corridor.

So where does a coke-abusing influence peddler go after raking in gobs of Daddy-enabled dough and abusing the U.S. Navy's ill-considered generosity? Back to Cronyland! Hunter joined Ukrainian natural-gas company Burisma Holdings - owned by a powerful Russian government sympathizer who fled to Russia in February - this spring. The hypocritical lobbyist-bashers at the White House deny he will be lobbying and deny any conflict of interest.

Meanwhile, Just Like You Joe was whipping up class envy in South Carolina last week. "Corporate profits have soared," he railed, thanks to "these guys running hedge funds in New York," who are to blame for "income inequality." You know, like his son and brother and their Beltway back-scratching patrons.

The Bidens: They're not like us.

- Michelle Malkin is the author of Culture of Corruption: Obama and His Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies. Her e-mail address is . © 2014 Creators.com

WOMEN IN THE WORLD TEXAS BRINGS BIG NAMES TO SAN ANTONIO (KSATTV)

KSAT-TV San Antonio, October 21, 2014

SAN ANTONIO - The Women in the World Texas conference comes to San Antonio Wednesday, and will showcase an array of social, cultural and humanitarian leaders from around the world.

Top names in attendance include Gloria Steinem, Eva Longoria, Dolores Huerta, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Dr. Jill Biden and Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe.

Panels will be held to discuss politics, feminism, and other issues affecting women.

KSAT will be at the conference and will have live updates on Twitter (@KSATnews) and on Facebook throughout the day.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS:

ALISON LUNDERGAN GRIMES, KAY HAGAN AND OTHER CANDIDATES AVOID OBAMA (NYT)

New York Times, October 22, 2014

After a few days of trying to ignore the question, Michelle Nunn, the Democratic candidate for the United States Senate in Georgia, acknowledged on Friday that she had voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. By this year's standards, that's pretty forthright, especially compared with Alison Lundergan Grimes, the Democrat running for the Senate in Kentucky, who refuses to discuss her presidential vote.

Only one Democratic Senate candidate this cycle has been willing to appear with the president on the stump: Gary Peters in Michigan. The others have spent months keeping their distance from Mr. Obama and some of his best policies. Even Ms. Nunn just started running a television ad complaining that an attack ad by her Republican opponent, David Perdue, featured a misleading photo of her and Mr. Obama. The photo was actually taken at an event honoring President George H.W. Bush, she said.

The panicky Democratic flight away from President Obama - and from some of the party's most important positions - is not a surprise. Mr. Obama remains highly unpopular among white voters, particularly in Southern states where candidates like Ms. Nunn, Ms. Grimes and several others are struggling to establish leads. But one of the reasons for his unpopularity is that nervous members of his own party have done a poor job of defending his policies over the nearly six years of his presidency, allowing a Republican narrative of failure to take hold.

Few voters know that the 2009 stimulus bill contributed heavily to the nation's economic recovery, saving and creating 2.5 million jobs. Not a word of it is spoken on the campaign trail, where little credit is also given to the White House for months of promising economic news.

Similarly, the Affordable Care Act, one of the most far-reaching and beneficial laws to have been passed by Congress in years, gets little respect even among the Democratic candidates who voted for it. Though none support the Republican position of repeal, most talk about the need to "fix" the health law, as if it were a wreck alongside the road rather than a vehicle providing millions of people with health coverage.

"When I think about the health care law, frustrated, disappointed, you can put a lot of words toward it, but every day I work to try to fix it," said Senator Mark Begich of Alaska, in a radio ad. (Mr. Begich voted for the law.) In a recent debate, Senator Kay Hagan, a Democrat of North Carolina, talked mostly about the "common-sense fixes" she wants to make to the law.

Several Democratic candidates, including Ms. Hagan, Ms. Nunn, and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, quickly adopted the right-wing talking point that President Obama needs to impose a travel ban on all residents of African countries with Ebola cases, even though most public-health experts say such a ban would be ineffective and could make the situation worse.

Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, who has fought loudly against the president's energy policies, has scurried so far to the right that she even opposes legalizing marijuana for medical purposes, though her leading Republican opponent supports it.

Many of these candidates are running in difficult political environments and are being careful about what they say or don't say in hopes of preserving Democratic control of the Senate. They run the risk, though, of alienating important constituencies who prefer a party with a spine, especially black voters, who remain very supportive of Mr. Obama. By not standing firmly for their own policies, Democrats send a message to voters that the unending Republican criticism of the president is legitimate. There is much that is going right in this country, and there is still time for Democrats to say so.

HBO AND CBS MOVE TOWARD SELLING CONTENT DIRECTLY TO CONSUMERS (NYT)

By Editorial Board, New York Times

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Executives at media and cable companies have been resisting the idea of selling TV channels à la carte for years, saying it was not financially feasible. But that resistance is starting to give way to a more pragmatic approach that should benefit consumers.

Last week, officials at HBO said they would start selling an Internet-only subscription to the network's movies and shows next year. Also last week, CBS started selling all its programming online for \$5.99 a month. And companies like Dish Network and Verizon are planning to sell Web-

based TV subscriptions.

The cable bundle - that overflowing buffet of hundreds of TV channels that can cost \$80 a month or more - has understandably frustrated consumers. Many Americans would prefer to pay less for their favorite channels. But cable companies like Comcast and Time Warner and media conglomerates like Viacom and Disney have had a huge financial incentive to push consumers to buy ever larger bundles for higher prices. These companies have also successfully lobbied against bills introduced by lawmakers like Senator John McCain that would encourage cable companies to sell channels à la carte.

But the success of streaming video companies like Netflix and Hulu and the fear that many younger Americans may never subscribe to cable or satellite TV have forced media and telecommunications executives to rethink their positions. Companies like HBO and CBS are betting that they can reach more subscribers by cutting out the middleman and selling directly to consumers.

That could, indeed, help some Americans save money. For example, people who only want to watch "Game of Thrones" and "Girls" might be able to buy an online HBO subscription for, say, \$20 a month, not the \$70 they would have to pay Comcast for a cable subscription that includes HBO and dozens of channels they do not want. (Consumers will, of course, have to pay separately for a high-speed Internet connection.)

The coming wave of Internet-based TV services might also make the cable and media industries more efficient. Some niche networks that have a small but strong followings might find it more lucrative to ditch cable companies and establish a direct relationship with viewers.

Nonetheless, there will be problems. Some companies might try to make up for the revenue they lose as consumers cancel cable-TV subscriptions by raising the price of high-speed Internet service. Most American households buy broadband Internet service from a cable or phone company, and those companies could interfere with or block online video streams.

Earlier this year, Netflix complained that some of its customers had a hard time watching its movies on their Internet connections from Comcast, Verizon and other companies. Those problems were resolved when Netflix agreed to pay the broadband companies to connect its system directly to their networks.

That is why it is important that the Federal Communications Commission enact strong rules prohibiting broadband companies from blocking or interfering with Internet content. Regulators must also be careful not to allow the industry to become even less competitive as large companies like Comcast and AT&T seek to acquire smaller companies like Time Warner Cable and DirecTV.

SOME GOOD NEWS ON THE EBOLA FRONT (NYT)

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Americans who are worried about the risk of an Ebola outbreak in this country can take heart from two recent successes. In Texas, 43 people who were being monitored because they had had direct or indirect contact with Thomas Eric Duncan, a Liberian who died of Ebola in a Dallas hospital, were found clear of the Ebola virus on Monday.

Also that day, the World Health Organization declared Nigeria free of Ebola. The Nigerian health authorities were able to snuff out a small outbreak that could have spread through the crowded slums of Lagos, a city with 21 million people, and beyond.

The Nigerian success can be attributed primarily to an extraordinarily vigorous effort to track down everyone who had contact with a possibly infected person and isolating and treating anyone found to have the disease so that they would not infect anyone else. This strategy is what American health officials mean when they say Ebola can be contained through standard public health measures of tracking and isolation.

Nigeria's outbreak started on July 20 when a Liberian who was a naturalized American citizen defied medical advice, left a hospital in Monrovia, Liberia, where he was being held for observation, and flew to Lagos. He died five days later but not before infecting nine doctors and nurses who thought he had malaria.

An all-out effort to find and isolate hundreds of potential contacts in Lagos and other parts of the country held the outbreak to only 19 patients who came down with Ebola, of whom seven died.

That was deemed a "spectacular success story" by the W.H.O. Another West African country, Senegal, which had a single imported case and a smaller number of contacts to trace and isolate,

was declared free of Ebola on Friday.

Both countries will need to keep their guards up. As long as the epidemic rages out of control in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, there will always be a risk that infected people will leave their home countries and seek better conditions elsewhere.

In Dallas, the 43 people being monitored emerged from the 21-day incubation period for the virus without a single one becoming sick. That includes Mr. Duncan's fiancée, who cared for him when he was sick, and three other family members in the same apartment; all four stayed in the apartment for several days with contaminated towels and bedding that had not been sanitized. It remains possible that additional health care workers - beyond the two nurses who are already infected - will come down with Ebola. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital made mistakes in dealing with the Ebola patient and the nurses who cared for him. They have now taken steps to prevent further mishaps. The danger of an outbreak affecting the public in this country is very, very slight, and the experience in Nigeria and Senegal shows that diligent responses can work.

INEQUALITY IN HONG KONG (NYT)

New York Times, October 22, 2014

The talks in Hong Kong between pro-Chinese government officials and pro-democracy student leaders are aimed mainly at easing tensions in the streets. Not on the agenda is fundamental reform of the conditions that provoked the unrest.

Chief among these conditions is China's refusal to loosen its grip on the city's political system by allowing full and open democratic elections for Hong Kong's top public office, as it had promised to do. The protesters insist that it is their right to choose who runs Hong Kong, but Beijing-backed officials have supported only cosmetic changes to the city's restrictive election law.

A related problem, as Neil Gough of The Times reported recently, is a persistent and widening wealth gap in Hong Kong. A small pro-Chinese government elite has profited greatly from the city's role in the rise of China, while incomes and opportunities for the middle and working classes have been squeezed. This elite, which controls the most lucrative sectors of Hong Kong's economy, fears that greater democracy - in the form of political participation and shared prosperity - would threaten the increasingly monopolistic crony capitalism from which they benefit.

The inequality that has helped to fuel the unrest in Hong Kong is reflected in the name the protesters took for their effort - Occupy Central, an allusion to the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in the United States three years ago that elevated the issue of inequality in America's political and economic debates.

Occupy Central, however, has a bigger challenge than its American namesake. It faces a totalitarian regime determined to deny its opponents the political means of changing their circumstances.

The problem in America is a dysfunctional political system that puts party ambitions and campaign donations above public needs. Still, elections and other established political processes, when used and protected, provide a way to identify and choose new and presumably more responsive leaders.

The worthy goal, in Hong Kong and the United States, is to link robust democracy to robust capitalism to broadly raise living standards. Like all worthy goals, it is not achievable or sustainable without struggle.

THE UPSIDE OF LOWER OIL PRICES (NYT)

By The Editorial Board

New York Times, October 22, 2014

The price of crude oil has fallen roughly 25 percent since a peak in June, but whether that's good news or bad depends on where you stand. It's bad for members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, and other nations and governments that rely heavily on oil exports because their income has taken a huge hit. It's especially bad for Russia and Iran, which have relied on high oil prices to defy the United States and Western sanctions. It's bad for the environment because cheaper oil means fewer incentives to develop alternative and less carbon-intensive sources of energy.

But it's not bad for Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the global oil industry. Saudi Arabia has ample

cash reserves to withstand a drop in income, shows no inclination to reduce production and seems to prefer putting a squeeze on its geopolitical rivals in Iran and Russia. For the United States, it's a mixed bag. American oil production is soaring, and lower prices could slow production of shale oil, which is expensive and needs higher prices to be profitable. But lower oil prices mean reduced costs for consumers and businesses and a boost for economies across the industrialized world. The large increase in American production is, in fact, one reason cited for the drop in prices. The other is a continuing slump in demand in Europe and other developed regions and slower growth in China. Characteristically, Russia has sniffed an American-led plot, with articles in the government press recalling how a sudden and sharp increase in Saudi production in 1985 caused prices to drop so low that the Soviet economy folded, followed by the Soviet state. All that will make for some heated debates at the next scheduled OPEC meeting in November. But regardless of whether the oil ministers decide to reduce production and nudge prices up, the fact is that oil prices will always rise and fall in response to geopolitical crises, economic trends and natural disasters. For now, it is enough to see petro-dictators at least temporarily humbled and forced to understand that oil riches do not give them license to bend the international order to their will. And it is good for industrial and developing countries to get some juice into their economies. But it is imperative that the United States and all other beneficiaries resist the temptation to use what could be a fleeting drop in prices to slow the search for alternative sources of energy. The planet, alas, does not have the resilience of oil prices.

CAPITALISM'S SUFFOCATING MUSIC (NYT)

By Frank Bruni

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Onstage before thousands of fans, Sam Smith sang "Stay With Me," beseeching his partner in a one-night stand for a few minutes more, and I half wondered if the two of them needed the extra time to finish bottles of Miller Lite, because a printed plug for the beer hovered over his head. Performing "Summertime Sadness," Lana Del Rey told a lover to "kiss me hard before you go." Would she be texting him later with a Samsung Galaxy, the smartphone for which the stage on which she appeared was visibly named?

And while I'd never thought about any car in connection with the musicians in the band Interpol, I came to picture them caroming from gig to gig in a Civic or an Accord. "Honda" floated over them as they gave their concert.

For every stage, a different sponsor. Behind every beat, a different brand.

This happened in early October. I was at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, and I was at the limits of my patience. I hadn't expected all of these corporate come-ons, so pervasive in other precincts, to be assaulting me here of all places.

"Keep Austin Weird" is the Texas capital's unofficial slogan, a clue to its proudly subversive soul. And a gathering of bare-armed, bare-legged lovers of song and smokers of pot on a gigantic field brings to mind Woodstock, not Austin Ventures, which provides financing to start-ups, and RetailMeNot, which distributes discount coupons. Those firms, too, were sponsors of stages. Someone shoved a free sample of Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal at me on my way in. Someone else handed out free beer cozies advertising Imperial, a brew on sale at the event. Plastered all over the place were posters for "Not That Kind of Girl," the new memoir by a certain "Girls" creator. The festival had been misnamed. This was Lenapalooza.

I kept thinking of another writer, David Foster Wallace. His novel "Infinite Jest," published in 1996, imagines a tomorrow in which time itself is auctioned off to the highest bidder and the calendar becomes a billboard. There's the "Year of the Whopper," the "Year of the Whisper-Quiet Maytag Dishmaster" and even the "Year of the Tucks Medicated Pad" - a 12-month paean to posterior discomfort, 52 weeks in honor of hemorrhoids.

Is that future so far off? While recording devices have liberated many of us from commercials on television, the rest of our lives are awash in ads. They're now nestled among the trailers at movies. They flicker on the screens in taxis.

They're woven so thoroughly into sporting events, from Nascar races to basketball games, that it's hard to imagine an era when they weren't omnipresent. But in a story earlier this year on the website Consumerist, Chris Moran reported that 20 years ago, only one of the major-league baseball stadiums had a corporate moniker, Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

In contrast, 20 of the 30 stadiums now have sponsors.

It's the same with football, maybe worse. On the weekend after I got back from Austin, I went to watch the New York Jets play, and within five minutes of my arrival at MetLife Stadium, I was confronted with all sorts of sub-sponsors.

Near the Verizon gate, I spotted a V.I.P. section called the Hertz suites and saw signs that identified JetBlue as the official airline of the team, Toyota as its official vehicle and the Microsoft Surface as the official tablet of the National Football League. I resolved to check out the restrooms for an official toilet paper. (Note to Cottonelle: I did, and there's an unclaimed opportunity for you, if you can beat Charmin to the punch.)

Inside the stadium, the Verizon scoreboard was not to be confused with the Bud Light scoreboard or the Pepsi scoreboard.

When Americans talk about how crass contemporary life can seem, this advertising onslaught is part of what they're reacting to. And their growing chilliness toward corporations and sense of capitalism run amok aren't just about the salaries of chief executives and the tax dodges in play. They're about the way hucksterism invades everything, scooping up everyone.

Matthew McConaughey is at his career's summit, with a recent Oscar for "Dallas Buyers Club" and a splendid performance in "Interstellar" (to be released next month), and what's he doing with this clout? He's putting it behind the wheel of a Lincoln and peddling luxury cars the way Beyoncé has pushed Pepsi all these years.

Sellers keep finding new, willing vessels for their logos everywhere they turn. Will we someday travel from San Francisco to Northern California across the Gulden's Mustard Bridge, for a hike in the Wells Fargo Redwood Forest?

It's a vendor's world. We're just pawns in it, even when all we want to do is hum a simple tune.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A GOOD PRE-K (NYT)

By Shael Polakow-Suransky And Nancy Nager

New York Times, October 22, 2014

WITH the introduction of universal pre-K in New York City, we have created a new entry point into our public school system. This raises a key question: What do we want our children's first experiences in school to be? What does a good education look like for 4-year-olds?

This summer, Bank Street College of Education led training for 4,000 of New York's pre-K teachers, including both veterans and hundreds of people who started teaching pre-K for the first time last month. Worried teachers talked about how the pressure to achieve good outcomes on the third-grade state exams has been trickling down to early childhood classrooms in the form of work sheets, skill drills and other developmentally inappropriate methods.

The problem is real, and it is not unique to New York City. Earlier this year, Daphna Bassok and Anna Rorem, educational policy researchers at the University of Virginia, found strong evidence that current kindergarten classrooms rely too heavily on teacher-directed instruction. Their study, "Is Kindergarten the New First Grade?" revealed that the focus on narrow academic skills crowded out time for play, exploration and social interaction. In a 2009 report for the Alliance for Childhood, "Crisis in the Kindergarten," Edward Miller and Joan Almon reported that kindergarten teachers felt that prescriptive curricular demands and pressure from principals led them to prioritize academic skill-building over play.

This is a false choice. We do not need to pick between play and academic rigor.

While grown-ups recognize that pretending helps children find their way into the world, many adults think of play as separate from formal learning. The reality is quite different. As they play, children develop vital cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional skills. They make discoveries, build knowledge, experiment with literacy and math and learn to self-regulate and interact with others in socially appropriate ways. Play is also fun and interesting, which makes school a place where children look forward to spending their time. It is so deeply formative for children that it must be at the core of our early childhood curriculum.

What does purposeful play look like? When you step into an exemplary pre-K classroom, you see a room organized by a caring, responsive teacher who understands child development. Activity centers are stocked with materials that invite exploration, fire the imagination, require initiative and prompt collaboration. The room hums.

In the blocks area, two girls build a bridge, talking to each other about how to make sure it doesn't

collapse and taking care not to bump into the buildings of children next to them. In an area with materials for make-believe, children enact an elaborate family scenario after resolving who will be the mommy, who will be the grandpa and who will be the puppy. Another group peers through a magnifying glass to examine a collection of pine cones and acorns. On the rug, children lie on their stomachs turning the pages of books they have selected, while at the easel a boy dips his brush into red paint and swoops the paint mostly onto his paper.

The teacher observes and comments. She shifts from group to group, talking with children about their work ("I see that you made a big red circle."); helping children resolve a conflict ("You both want to be the mommy. What should we do?"); posing an open-ended question to stimulate exploration and problem-solving ("What do you notice when you use the magnifying glass that is different from when you use your eyes?"); and guiding children to manage themselves ("When you finish your snack, what activity would you like to choose?").

Barbara Biber, one of Bank Street's early theorists, argued that play develops precisely the skills - and, just as important, the disposition - children need to be successful throughout their lives. The child "projects his own pattern of the world into the play," she wrote, "and in so doing brings the real world closer to himself. He is building the feeling that the world is his to understand, to interpret, to puzzle about, to make over. For the future we need citizens in whom these attitudes are deeply ingrained."

Earlier in the 20th century, the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky made the related argument that children's thinking develops through activity-based learning and social interactions with adults and peers. When teachers base their curriculums on Dr. Vygotsky's ideas, there are significant benefits for children's capacity to think, to plan and to sustain their attention on difficult tasks.

Play has long-lasting benefits. What is referred to as self-regulation in preschool becomes resiliency in high school. The University of Pennsylvania psychologist Angela Duckworth has found that this trait, which she famously calls grit, can make or break students, especially low-income students. Over the past three years, the New York City Department of Education developed a framework to support the core behavioral elements that drive college and career readiness. Many of them - persistence, planning, the ability to communicate and the capacity to collaborate - have their roots in early childhood.

Next fall, there will be more students in pre-K in New York City than there are in the entire school system of Atlanta or Seattle. To his credit, Mayor Bill de Blasio has not only pushed for expanding access but has also insisted on improving quality and put real money into training and materials. This is a strong start. But we still need to help parents, administrators and policy makers see what the children themselves know intuitively: Classrooms that pulse with meaningful play are our smartest investment.

Shael Polakow-Suransky, who served as senior deputy chancellor of the New York City Department of Education from 2011-14, is the president of Bank Street College, where Nancy Nager is a professor of education and child development.

PUTIN AND THE POPE (NYT)

By Thomas L. Friedman

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Reading the papers these days I find that the two world leaders who stir the most passion in me are Pope Francis and Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia. One is everything you'd want in a leader, the other everything you wouldn't want. One holds sway over 1.2 billion Roman Catholics, the other over nine time zones. One keeps surprising me with his capacity for empathy, the other by how much he has become a first-class jerk and thug. But neither can be ignored and both have an outsized influence on the world today.

First, the pope. At a time when so many leaders around the world are looking to promote their political fortunes by exploiting grievances and fault lines, we have a pope asking his flock to do something hard, something outside their comfort zone, pushing them to be more inclusive of gays and divorced people.

Yes, Francis was rebuffed by conservative bishops at a recent Vatican synod when he asked them to embrace the notion that "homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community," adding, "are we capable of welcoming these people, guaranteeing to them a fraternal space in our communities?"

But, as an editorial in this paper noted: "The very fact that Francis ordered church leaders to address these challenges seems a landmark in Vatican history." The pope asked that rejected language be published for all to see, while also cautioning against "hostile inflexibility - that is, wanting to close oneself within the written word, and not allowing oneself to be surprised by God." "Hostile inflexibility?" Whose leadership does that describe? Look at Putin's recent behavior: His military was indirectly involved in downing a Malaysian airliner over Ukraine and his K.G.B. has not only been trying to take a bite out of Ukraine but are nibbling on Estonia, Georgia and Moldova, all under the guise of protecting "Russian speakers."

I opposed NATO expansion because I believed that there are few global problems that we can solve without the help of Russia. By expanding NATO at the end of the Cold War, when Russia was weak, we helped to cultivate a politics there that would one day be very receptive to Putin's message that the West is ganging up on Russia. But, that said, the message is a lie. The West has no intention of bringing Ukraine into NATO. And please raise your hand if you think the European Union plans to invade Russia.

Yet Putin just exploits these fears for two reasons. First, he has a huge chip on his shoulder - no, excuse me; he has a whole lumberyard there - of resentment that Russia is no longer the global power it once was. But rather than make Russia great again by tapping its creative people - empowering them with education, the rule of law and consensual politics to realize their full potential - he has opted for the shortcut of tapping his oil and gas wells and seizing power from his people.

And instead of creating a Russia that is an example to its neighbors, he relies on the brute force that his oil and gas can still buy him. While he rails against NATO, he is really afraid of European Union expansion - that Ukrainians would rather embrace the E.U. market and democracy rules than their historical ties to Russia because they know that through the E.U. they can realize potentials that would never be possible with Russia.

By seizing Crimea and stoking up nationalism, Putin was not protecting Russia from NATO. He was protecting himself from the viruses of E.U. accountability and transparency, which, if they took hold in Ukraine, could spread to Moscow, undermining his kleptocracy.

Normally, I wouldn't care, but when the world is dividing between zones of order and disorder, and the world of order needs to be collaborating to stem and reverse disorder, the fact that Putin is stoking disorder on Russia's borders, and not collaborating to promote order in the Middle East, is a real problem. What's more worrying is that the country he threatens most is Russia. If things go bad there - and its economy is already sagging under Western sanctions - the world of disorder will get a lot bigger.

That is why Putin's leadership matters, and so does the pope's. I'm focused on Putin because I think he is making the world a worse place for bad reasons, when he could make a difference in Europe and the Middle East with just an ounce more decency and collaboration. America, too, has plenty to learn from the pope's humility, but say what you will, we're still focused on trying to strengthen the global commons, whether by protecting people from jihadists in Iraq or fighting Ebola in Africa. We could do more. Putin needs to do a lot more.

"The best leaders don't set timid and selfish goals that are easy to meet but instead set bold and inclusive goals that are hard to achieve," remarked Timothy Shriver, the chairman of Special Olympics, who has just written a book on leadership, "Fully Alive: Discovering What Matters Most." "We're all looking for ways to make sense of a world without a center, but we'll only find that in people who lead with authentic humility and reckless generosity."

(ONLY) TWO RULES FOR A GOOD DIET (NYT)

By Mark Bittman

New York Times, October 22, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO - To a large extent, you can fix the food system in your world today. Three entities are involved in creating our food choices: business (everything from farmers to PepsiCo), government (elected and appointed officials and their respective organizations) and the one with the greatest leverage, the one that you control: you.

We shouldn't discount small farms and businesses, nor should we ignore relatively minor officials like the mayor of El Monte, Calif., who tried (and failed) to establish a soda tax to benefit public health. We do not always know where real change will come from, and certainly smaller operations

may be more innovative and show us the way.

But for the most part we know where real change doesn't come from: Big Food, the corporations that supply most of the food and stuff masquerading as food that's sold in supermarkets, as fast food and in casual dining chains; and government, especially the federal government, which is beholden to and entranced by big business. Nothing new here.

There often seem to be more happy exceptions in industry than in government. If you look at the relatively new companies that have blazed a path for the food industry, you see, among others, Whole Foods and Chipotle. One demonstrated that supermarkets could sell better ingredients; the other opened the door to non-junkie fast food.

Neither is above criticism, and it's possible both will be surpassed within a few years by newcomers with fresher and better ways of doing things. Still, it's comforting to know that at least somewhere in the corners of this food system, market competition is giving opportunities to clever and even well-intentioned people to figure out how to make real money by actually providing the public with better food.

I'm especially impressed with the way Whole Foods is innovating in the arena of labeling, gradually extending its own internal labeling system from fish to meats and now to fruits and vegetables. (As I said, though, they're hardly above criticism.) Marketing is of course part of it, but shoppers who want to talk back to the supply chain by knowing where their food comes from don't otherwise have a way to do that. If Whole Foods gives them what they want, then despite the "Whole Paycheck" nickname (and there's some evidence that Whole Foods is starting to compete on price as well), those who can get there and afford it will favor it. This is progress, doing well by doing at least some good, and that can't be said about most corporations involved in food. See, for example, the too-little-too-late attempt at transparency by McDonald's.

We can't rely on even well-intentioned souls in industry, but given the ball-dropping entity that is supposed to be vigilant regarding our health and welfare - the federal government - we have little choice. The legislative branch isn't worth discussing, and leadership from the executive branch has been disappointing. Two issues could have been improved definitively in the last six years - the marketing of junk to kids and the existence of antibiotics in our food supply - and President Obama has accomplished little in either case. However stymied he may have been, we are looking at a landscape that hasn't changed much, the exception being the improved but still hotly contested school food programs supported by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

Even worse are the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, the last of which refuses to ban the routine use of antibiotics in animal production despite knowing that a ban is possible and desirable. It's also dawdling on mandating an improved nutrition label on packaged food, probably because of industry taking "interest."

We shouldn't need to rely on Whole Foods for good labeling. Yet every day I'm asked, "How do I know that what I'm buying is O.K.?" It seems the better educated and more concerned people are about this, the more confused they are. Drill deep enough and the list to worry about becomes overwhelming: organics, genetically modified organisms, carbon footprint, packaging, fair trade, waste, labor, animal welfare and for all I know the quality of the water that's being used to wash your organic greens.

I get this. I'm a worrier, too, though I tend to expend my neurotic energy on different topics. The overall environment means that you're pretty much on your own if you try to eat healthfully in spite of the system, and you must take up that battle through a dozen or more decisions each day. But there are two big decisions that can put you on the right path and help you largely steer clear of antibiotics, excess sugar, unwanted chemicals, animal cruelty, and more.

Here then, is your two-step guide for an unassailably powerful personal food policy.

1. Stop eating junk and hyperprocessed food. This eliminates probably 80 percent of the stuff that is being sold as "food."
2. Eat more plants than you did yesterday, or last year.

If you add "Cook your own food" to this list, it's even more powerful, but these two steps alone allow you to reduce the amount of antibiotics you're consuming; pretty much eliminate GMOs from your diet, lighten your carbon footprint; reduce your chances of becoming ill as a result of your diet; save money; cut way back on sugar, other junk and unnecessary and potentially harmful nonfood additives; and so on.

All without relying on corporate benevolence or the government getting things right. The power lies

with you.

WOULD STRONGER PARTIES MEAN LESS POLARIZATION? (NYT)

By Thomas B. Edsall

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Ever since they emerged in the early 1800s, political parties have been a target of public scorn. But they have always had their defenders - a smaller, less influential camp that holds that parties are more beneficial than harmful because they play an essential role in mediating political disputes.

The anti-party forces fitfully succeed in enacting laws and rules to restrain party organizations and bosses, including the adoption of referendum and recall procedures; requirements that states pick delegates to the national conventions through primaries and caucuses; bans on closed-door meetings; the prohibition of legislative earmarks; and legislation that restricts the size and source of contributions to the national political parties.

The intensity of polarized politics at every level of government now puts the dispute over political parties at the center of a debate among office holders, political scientists, legal experts and partisan activists. Is it possible that strengthening the parties could lessen polarization?

The pro-party camp contends that many reforms have unintentionally fostered polarization: diminishing the clout of parties and party leaders undermines their role as a force for moderation and compromise.

Nathaniel Persily, a professor of law at Stanford, is a proponent of strong, well-financed parties. Polarization, he wrote in an email to me, "is a cost of many of these good government reforms. It is almost an intended cost if you think about it." Why? Persily argues that the purpose of In "Strengthening Parties," a chapter in the forthcoming volume "Solutions to Political Polarization in America," Persily contends that in the case of campaign finance, "the good good-government reforms that have been tried have, if anything, made things worse."

The claim that reforms have made things worse is based on the interaction between the 2002 McCain-Feingold Act, which regulated campaign finance, and two 2010 court decisions, the Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United and the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit decision Speechnow.org v. F.E.C.

The McCain-Feingold Act prohibited political parties from accepting unlimited contributions from corporations, unions and rich people, which had come to be called "soft money."

The federal court decisions, in contrast, explicitly allowed independent political groups - including both super PACs and politically active nonprofits - to accept all forms of soft money.

Pro-party advocates argue that McCain-Feingold in particular has undermined political parties, while court rulings have empowered donors and independent committees, many of whom have agendas more polarizing than those of the parties.

At a Bipartisan Policy Center conference in Washington earlier this month organized to explore the current campaign finance situation, Ray La Raja, a political scientist at the University of Massachusetts, made a case, like Persily, in support of political parties:

La Raja, who has been working with Brian F. Schaffner, another UMass political scientist, presented slides comparing states that limit contributions to political parties with states without such limits. In the states without limits, a much higher proportion of the total contributions to candidates, especially to centrist-moderate candidates, comes from the parties than it does in states with limits. In addition, the degree of ideological polarization between Republicans and Democrats in legislatures in states without limits is substantially lower than it is in states with limits, as Figure 1 demonstrates.

Thomas E. Mann, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who is a strong supporter of McCain-Feingold, disagrees with Persily and La Raja. At the conference, and in later email exchanges, Mann made a number of key points.

First of all, Mann contends, Republicans are the driving force behind polarization. Their opposition to Democratic proposals is based less on ideological principle than on a strategic political decision to oppose President Obama on every front, even when he takes a position previously advocated by conservatives. Examples of the latter include the individual mandate under Obamacare and end-of-life counseling.

"Much of the acrimony and gridlock is not a consequence" of ideological issues or campaign

finance, Mann told participants at the conference. Instead, he argues, "it's strategic - it's all about capturing a majority in the House and Senate, and the White House."

According to Mann,

Michael Barber, a political scientist at Brigham Young University who supports strong political parties, provided evidence to the conference that altering campaign finance laws has significant costs and benefits - trade-offs in every direction.

Barber presented slides that showed that individual contributors to candidates are strikingly ideological and partisan, thus fueling polarization. That is, contributions from traditional PACs, which give relatively small amounts directly to candidates, are focused on the goal of gaining access, and thus are far more politically centrist (Figure 2).

In a working paper on the impact that campaign finance regulation has on state elected officials, Barber found that "legislators who raise more money from individuals are more likely to be ideologically extreme," while "higher limits on contributions from PACs yield more ideologically moderate legislators."

One interpretation of Barber's findings is that a reduction in the number of contributions from individual donors, including small donors, would diminish ideological conflict. This would mean, in effect, abandoning the long-sought goal of increasing participation in the campaign finance process. Conversely, by this reasoning, advocates of increased participation by small donors will have to tolerate exacerbated polarization and gridlock if they are successful.

I asked Barber in an email about these conflicts, and he wrote that

Not an attractive option for either side. Reformers and party loyalists both face what Persily describes as "a devil's choice."

McCain-Feingold does appear to have contributed to a decline in Republican Party fund-raising, and to the end of rising cash totals for Democratic Party committees. According to the Campaign Finance Institute, Democratic Party fund-raising grew from \$229.8 million in 1992 to \$626.5 million in 2000, the last presidential election year in which soft money contributions were permitted. Since then, Democratic totals have remained virtually level, reaching \$631.1 million in 2012 (all these figures are adjusted for inflation).

On the Republican side, the post-McCain-Feingold election years have produced a substantial decline in donations, which fell to \$697.7 million in 2012 from \$815.3 million in 2000.

But insofar as the parties are struggling, it is far more the result of court rulings that have led to an explosion of outside spending, which, in key battleground contests in the current election cycle, often eclipses spending by the parties.

Experts who are at the heart of these developments argue that the courts over the past four years have tipped the balance in favor of independent political committees. Bob Bauer, a prominent Democratic campaign finance lawyer who spoke at the Washington conference, noted that "there are enormous differences between parties and outside groups," but the legal system now "privileges the groups."

The result is a distorted balance of financial and political power with the least accountable organizations gaining the most leverage over our campaigns. And yet, as we try to fix that problem and to address the general disrepute into which American politics has fallen, we have to think hard about how the unintended consequences of prior efforts at reform have helped to bring us where we are now.

A NUCLEAR DEAL, NOW OR NEVER (NYT)

By Vali R. Nasr

New York Times, October 22, 2014

WASHINGTON - Like it or not, the calendar of voting - here and in Iran - is driving the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. A first, easy prediction: Don't expect progress in the few days that remain until America's Election Day. But then the tempo could ratchet up quickly. And it had better, if we are to expect a nuclear deal at all.

The clock begins ticking on Election Day because Nov. 24 is the target date for a comprehensive agreement. But until the next Congress is chosen on Nov. 4, the Americans can't make politically risky promises and the Iranians can't react, not knowing where the balance of power between Republicans and Democrats will lie.

Slightly more than a year from now, Iran will hold its own elections, which will ultimately decide

who its next top leader will be. Given that the current supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has set the balance of power between reformists and hard-liners, that choice could well change the direction of Iranian policy making on any potential deal for a very long time.

These storm clouds will narrow the diplomats' room to maneuver as each election approaches. But they will also part long enough, between election seasons, to perhaps allow for dramatic new proposals and agreements. It is a complicated game: The elections affect the talks, and the rate of progress in the talks determines how voters feel. Each side must calculate not just how a final deal would resonate at home, but also when it would strengthen the hand of its most desired partner on the other side.

Here is how this interwoven calendar is likely to play out:

2014: The United States pegged the negotiations to its political calendar when it fixed the deadline for a final deal after next month's election. The calculation assumed that once the next Congress's makeup was known, Iranian negotiators who sought a deal would be eager to consummate one in plenty of time to show voters a rising economy, based on sanctions relief. If the Republicans do as well as expected, the Obama administration would also want to consolidate a deal quickly, before the new Congress meets in January. In theory, then, the best chance for a deal is in the next few months, when both sides' political motivations converge.

But there is a big problem: The sides remain far apart. The United States and its partners insist that Iran cut its enrichment capability enough to preclude a rapid breakout toward producing a nuclear weapon; Iran refuses to consider any cut that could seem to dismantle its nuclear program. Iran also seeks full and immediate relief from economic sanctions; its opponents reject that as imprudent and impractical. Any deal would require both sides to compromise. And even a signed deal would be attacked by hard-liners in both countries, especially if President Obama bypassed Congress and suspended most sanctions on his own. Iran would be skeptical, since the next president could restore them.

Does that mean a quick deal is not in the cards, forcing the talks to be extended well into next year? Not necessarily - even if the Republicans win big next month. In that case, Iran would question whether the next Congress would go along with any sanctions relief. And the weaker the Obama administration looked to Iranian negotiators, the more they would ask for broader sanctions relief up front.

That would in turn make it more difficult for the administration to sell such an agreement to the current Congress - unless, of course, the Iranians significantly changed course on their demands to keep their enrichment program. So a big Republican win would only increase pressure on Mr. Obama and Iran to settle now or never.

The other option - reset the clock and hope for a solid deal to emerge more slowly - is a poorer bet. The reason lies in the next election cycle.

2015: In December 2015, Iran will elect a new Parliament. Within months, voters will also choose a Council of Experts, who in turn will pick the next supreme religious leader. Knowing how large those stakes are, Iran's negotiators already have their eyes on those elections. So should the American negotiators, because the date of any agreement could decide them.

At the moment, Parliament is controlled by hard-liners. To change that, President Hassan Rouhani needs the economic benefits that a nuclear deal can bring. And he needs them soon, if they are to impress voters. In other words, the longer it takes to get a deal, the less likely it is that it can help Mr. Rouhani. Iran's conservatives know that: If a deal is reached at all, they want it later rather than sooner.

Put that calendar together, and a strategy for America is clear. While the United States and its allies must achieve their core goals - effectively and dependably blocking Iran's path to a nuclear bomb - in any compromises they make, they need to remember, too, that getting a deal itself could be a game-changer in Iranian politics. The bet they should be making is on offering one while they still can; their counterparts are, after all, Iranian politicians whose interests lie in both achieving a nuclear deal and opening up their country. If the talks don't bear fruit soon, our narrow window of opportunity will shut, and the West will most likely have to contend with a far more recalcitrant Iran in an unstable Middle East.

The Iranian hard-liners are betting that a turn to the right in America would sink the talks, and that an end to talks would hand them a long-term victory in Iran. So even if Congress turns further rightward, we need to quicken the negotiations and achieve a deal as soon as possible. The

longer it takes, the more likely it is that politics here and in Iran will ultimately coalesce to sink any deal at all.

Vali R. Nasr, the dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is the author of "The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat."

RUSSIA TODAY, ARGENTINA TOMORROW (NYT)

By Fabián Bosoer And Federico Finchelstein

New York Times, October 22, 2014

Earlier this month, the president of Russia, Vladimir V. Putin, and the president of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, took part in a video conference to celebrate a new television partnership. Under the terms of the deal, the Russian-owned channel RT (formerly known as Russia Today) will soon begin broadcasting Spanish-language news in Argentina. Mrs. Kirchner hailed the development as a means for Argentines "to understand the real Russia," as well as to help Russians learn about "the real Argentina, unlike the way the international media and the so-called national media portray us."

Buenos Aires currently enjoys warm relations with Moscow for a variety of reasons. Argentina is looking to Russia for help in upgrading its energy sector, including a possible partnership with the Russian giant Gazprom to develop oil and shale gas production in Argentina.

The cooperation extends to diplomatic relations, too. Argentina has backed Russia's position on Ukraine, while Mr. Putin has offered political support in Argentina's international legal dispute with so-called vulture funds over the value of defaulted government bonds.

Evident in the TV deal, though, was a more disturbing convergence between the two states: a shared vision of the role that the mass media should play in the government and public life of the nation. "We are achieving a communication without intermediaries," said Mrs. Kirchner, "in order to transmit our own values." This approach was echoed by Mr. Putin, who spoke of an expanding electronic media environment as "a formidable weapon that enables public opinion manipulations."

The Spanish version of RT is intended as an antidote to the toxic influence of foreign media channels "that transmit news based on their interests," as Mrs. Kirchner put it. The Spanish-language RT deal mirrors the Venezuelan-Argentine venture in the public news channel Telesur, in which Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Ecuador and Uruguay also have minority stakes. Like Telesur, RT is presented not merely as an option in a pluralistic media landscape, but as the channel representing the true national cultures of each country in which it broadcasts.

From Ecuador to Venezuela, the conflation of state media, private media ownership by politicians and their cronies and party propaganda has been a prominent aspect of Latin American populism during its first decade of ascendancy. As the recent re-election of President Evo Morales in Bolivia shows, these populist leaders continue to enjoy broad support. But in Bolivia, as elsewhere in Latin America, these leaders have also manufactured their support by co-opting the power of state media and by marginalizing more critical elements of the independent media.

In Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, the typical strategy is to use antitrust laws to force commercial media groups to break up and sell off assets, which are then acquired by pro-government investors. For example, just days before Argentina's deal with RT became public, the government agency assigned to enforce the country's new media law announced that it would seek to dismember the audiovisual arm of the Clarín media group (which also publishes Argentina's principal newspaper of the same name, where one of us works as a journalist).

In Venezuela, the influential opposition newspaper Tal Cual, edited by the veteran left-wing politician Teodoro Petkoff, has announced its imminent closure - a situation described by the Inter-American Press Association as symptomatic of "the siege on the critical or independent press in Venezuela," where almost all TV channels and radio stations have come under government control. In Ecuador, after the newspaper Hoy was forced into partial closure when the government imposed an advertising boycott, its director attacked the country's new media law for "criminalizing journalistic work."

The populist rhetoric against critical newspapers and journalists is that they must be penalized as part of a struggle against the "economic interests" of private owners that are opposed to the common good. The roots of such populism can be traced to widespread grievances about the failures of the "Washington consensus," which made the continent a laboratory for neoliberal economics and imposed considerable hardships. With charismatic leadership, populism has

proved remarkably successful in electoral terms. But there is a difference between winning elections and a truly democratic culture, and Latin America's populist leaders have amassed enormous power even as they expanded social rights.

The increasingly harsh media policy does not alone explain populism's success, but it certainly helps promote its case. Among Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, there are important distinctions in the style and character of state interference with press freedom, but all of these populist administrations have harassed independent journalists. And in all of these countries, there has been a consolidation of what is, in effect, state propaganda.

To be sure, the anti-populist opposition used similar authoritarian tactics in the past - and might still do so, if permitted. But the populists have made this merger of state media and party messaging an essential condition for their rule of these democratic societies.

In its first decade, Latin American populism stressed the value of the state as the protector of the most excluded sectors of society and as the promoter of their interests. There have been major progressive achievements, reversing a legacy of social inequality. But as it moves into its second decade in power, populism seems engaged in a campaign to degrade independent journalism.

Does Latin America really wish to emulate Mr. Putin's approach to media freedom?

Fabián Bosser is an opinion editor at the Argentine newspaper Clarín. Federico Finchelstein is the chairman of the history department at the New School for Social Research.

BRAZILIANS ARE SHOCKED, SHOCKED AT CORRUPTION! (NYT)

By Antonio Prata

New York Times, October 22, 2014

We Brazilians suffer from a curious cognitive dysfunction, which occurs with the same frequency in our population as lactose intolerance does among the Japanese, or the inclination for punning among the English. We have the ability to be outraged by corruption, while engaging in our own petty versions of it.

As the second round of presidential voting approaches on Sunday, this evil is spreading like an epidemic. In bars, on the streets and on social networks, advocates of Dilma Rousseff, the Workers Party candidate for re-election, and Senator Aécio Neves, of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, never tire of reminding us of the "robberies" that their rivals commit.

Workers Party supporters cite the re-election scandal in which Social Democrats were accused of bribing congressmen to approve a constitutional amendment allowing Fernando Henrique Cardoso to compete again for the presidency in 1998. Social Democrats' supporters mention the "Mensalão," a case in which congressmen allied with the Workers Party regularly received money diverted from Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's illegal campaign contributions. Those not involved in the party squabbles tend to blame all the politicians, as if the politicians were a separate species, able to corrupt our reputable citizens.

Our citizens don't really need the help.

My introduction to Brazilians' cavalier attitude toward corruption came through family. When I was about 7 years old, we went to a Sunday lunch at my uncle Arthur's. Arthur (not his real name) was my richest uncle, and he lived in a house with a pool. During lunch, he proudly told our family he had found a way to turn off the water register in front of the house and could now fill his pool for free. I do not remember any member of my family reprimanding him.

Today, my uncle is retired, and he sends me angry emails about the corruption in the Workers Party government.

I would like to believe that the country's advancements in recent decades have made us more ethical, but that is not the case. A friend of mine, a lawyer in her 30s, has a hairdresser's license so she can get discounts on shampoo. She is a partner in a tax law firm and earns enough in a year to pay for shampoo for three future generations of her family.

A psychoanalyst whom I consulted years ago proposed to charge me less if I paid for my sessions in cash, thus allowing him to bypass the tax authorities.

In Rio de Janeiro, when you ask a taxi driver for a receipt, the usual response is, "What value do you want me to put in?" The reason being, the driver can give you a receipt with an inflated charge that allows you to steal 10 or 20 reais from your employer. Of course, in return for this "favor," he expects a small percentage in cash.

Even when we go to the movies, Brazilians find a way to bend the rules - if there is a line we will

look for a friend who is in a better position and think nothing of jumping ahead. But on Facebook and Twitter, the two parties, or politicians in general, clearly are to blame for all our adversities. Sure there have been advances in the 20 years that the parties have been in power. Under Mr. Cardoso (1995-2003), hyperinflation ended, the Brazilian real was strengthened, and the economy improved. Mr. da Silva (2003-2011) and Ms. Rousseff (2011 to date) deepened and extended social programs that have lifted more than 40 million people out of poverty. These advances, however, were made without putting an end to old problems: spurious alliances to obtain the majority in Congress, the exchange of favors, cronyism and corruption. These are traces of a country that emerged 514 years ago as Portugal's overseas pantry, where men were making money far from the law, the church and their wives - first, by exploiting pau brasil (a red tree whose sap was used to dye fabrics and that lent its name to our country), and after that by planting sugar cane, trafficking in slaves, and mining for gold and gems. Much of the disregard for consequences and of the expediency practiced by these explorers still exists today.

Am I the only Brazilian free of these traits? Of course not! Last year, I bought a refrigerator. The store said that, in addition to the delivery, they could install it for 450 reais. I thought that was expensive, and said I would do it myself. When the fridge arrived, however, I realized I couldn't handle it.

The delivery man coughed and proposed: "If you want it, I can install it now, for 100 reais, but the people from the store cannot find out."

"Sure," I nodded. Uncle Arthur would have been proud of me.

The other day, looking at that fridge, I realized that it is an image of today's Brazil: powerful, showy, forward-looking, but working on the old connections we insist on perpetuating. President Rousseff or Senator Neves will win the election, but it will take longer to solve the problems that hold back Brazil from being a great country.

Antonio Prata is a columnist for the newspaper Folha de São Paulo.

THE DIRTY EFFECTS OF MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL MINING (WP)

Washington Post, October 22, 2014

FOR DECADES, coal companies have been removing mountain peaks to haul away coal lying just underneath. More recently, scientists and regulators have been developing a clearer understanding of the environmental consequences. They aren't pretty.

In the 1990s, coal miners began using large equipment to strip away mountaintops in states such as West Virginia. The technique made it economical for them to extract more coal from troublesome seams in the rock, which might be too small for traditional mining or lodged in unstable formations. Environmentalists were appalled, but the practice spread and now accounts for more than 40 percent of West Virginia coal production.

Burning coal has a host of drawbacks: It produces both planet-warming carbon dioxide and deadly conventional air pollutants. Removing layers of mountaintop in the extraction process aggravates the damage. The displaced earth must go somewhere, typically into adjoining valleys, affecting the streams that run through them. The dust that's blown into the air on mountaintop removal sites, meanwhile, is suspected to be unhealthy for mine workers and nearby communities.

Scientists have recently produced evidence backing up both concerns. Over the summer, a U.S. Geological Survey study compared streams near mountaintop removal operations to streams farther away. In what should be "a global hotspot for fish biodiversity," according to Nathaniel Hitt, one of the authors, the researchers found decimated fish populations, with untold consequences for downstream river systems. The scientists noted changes in stream chemistry: Salts from the disturbed earth appear to have dissolved in the water, which may well have disrupted the food chain.

Last week, the Charleston Gazette reported on a new study finding that dust from mountaintop removal mining appears to contribute to greater risk of lung cancer. West Virginia University researchers took dust samples from several towns near mountaintop removal sites and tested them on lung cells, which changed for the worse. The findings fit into a larger, hazardous picture: People living near these sites experience higher rates of cancer and birth defects.

With these sorts of problems in mind, the Environmental Protection Agency is taking a more skeptical look at mountaintop removal mining permits. The Clean Water Act gives the government wide authority over industrial operations that change rivers and streams. The EPA has already

used it to revoke a permit from a controversial proposed mountaintop removal mine in Logan County, W.Va. The agency has also instructed its branch offices to be more careful about mountaintop removal projects that could change nearby water chemistry.

The coal industry and its allies are howling. Skeptics of mountaintop removal, one industry pamphlet insisted, "promote an anti-coal, anti-business agenda that uses environmental issues as a mere pawn to redistribute wealth, grab power, and put forth liberal, social ideology." The GOP-controlled House passed a bill that would strip the EPA of some of its permitting power. But just this month the Obama administration once again prevailed in court, beating back another industry challenge.

The emerging scientific evidence should cut through the rhetoric. The EPA is right to move more firmly to protect health and environment.

ON MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION PLANS, THE DISTRICT SHOULD SLOW DOWN (WP)

Washington Post, October 22, 2014

MOST VOTES have yet to be cast in the District's referendum on legalizing marijuana, but the D.C. Council is already making plans on how to regulate sales. The premature move is in keeping with the heedless rush to put the city's imprimatur on use of a drug whose impacts are still not fully known. It is not too late for more prudent judgment to prevail; voters on Nov. 4 could slow the push for legalization by voting no on Initiative 71.

The ballot initiative to be decided in the Nov. 4 general election would make it lawful for a person 21 years of age or older to possess up to two ounces of marijuana for personal use, to grow up to six plants at home and to transfer without payment up to one ounce of marijuana to another person 21 years or older. Because of the District's restrictions on what is subject to ballot approval, the initiative would not allow for sale of marijuana, creating a situation where having marijuana would be legal but getting it might require illegal acts.

A joint committee hearing will be held Oct. 30 on legislation to establish a taxation and regulation infrastructure for marijuana production and sale. Vincent B. Orange (D-At Large), chairman of the business and consumer committee that will hold the hearing with the finance committee, said the city needs to be prepared to move forward if the initiative passes, which, based on polls, he believes will be the case, and if Congress doesn't intervene, about which he won't hazard a guess. Much of the District's debate about Initiative 71 has centered on matters of race and social justice.

That was a serious issue when marijuana possession was subject to criminal prosecution and African Americans accounted for an outsize proportion of those arrested. But since decriminalization went into effect in July, possession is now subject to just a \$25 fine, among the lowest in the nation. As The Post's Marc Fisher recently detailed, some leaders in the African American community worry that legalization would not keep more young blacks out of jail because a more readily available drug could lead young people to harder drugs. "Scratch the surface of most homicides and rape cases, and the perpetrators were high on drugs, including marijuana," said Arthur Burnett of the National African American Drug Policy Coalition.

We are not in the Reefer Madness school of marijuana prohibition. We favored decriminalization. But the drug can have harmful effects; its active ingredient has been linked to memory problems, impaired thinking and weakened immune systems. And we question whether it is possible to legalize the drug for adults without sending a message to youth that its use is risk-free.

By waiting, the District would benefit from ongoing scientific research as well as the experience of states that only recently have legalized marijuana. It is easier to let a genie out of the bottle than to try to stuff one back in.

HOW BEN BRADLEE TRANSFORMED THE WASHINGTON POST (WP)

By Editorial Board

Washington Post, October 21, 2014

BENJAMIN C. Bradlee, who died Tuesday at the age of 93, was the architect and builder of the modern Washington Post. His conviction that even the most powerful should be held to a standard of truth-telling inspired journalists well beyond The Post. His exuberance at work and in life served as a model well beyond journalism.

As managing editor and then executive editor from 1965 to 1991, Mr. Bradlee liked to roam the sprawling newsroom. Once he came up to a young journalist on the National staff, hired just

months before, whose story was on Page One that day. Mr. Bradlee jabbed a finger at the front-page story. "Nothing like this!" he said, with a broad, knowing smile. There was nothing like working for him, either. His enthusiasm was infectious. When Mr. Bradlee stopped to ask what was going on, reporters eagerly shared a tantalizing idea or tip. "Worth a phone call," Mr. Bradlee often replied, and he needed say no more. His newsroom crackled with the energy of a modern startup. A certain "creative tension" was the reality, a competition among reporters and editors to win his approval. Mr. Bradlee loved the chase and the thrill of discovery. Mr. Bradlee called reporters "the best lie detectors," and nothing mattered more to him than exposing the truth, even if it took a long time. In his own account, the Vietnam War and then Watergate marked a crisis of confidence in American society, brought on by leaders who did not level with the people. In the Pentagon Papers, excerpts of which he published despite government threats, Mr. Bradlee saw proof that the American people had not been told the truth about decisions made to escalate the war. Then came Watergate and his determination to find out what really happened. He was outraged at President Nixon's behavior. Nixon "lied over and over again with intent to deceive the American public and thereby save his ass from the consequences of his crimes," Mr. Bradlee wrote in his memoir. The newspaper won global recognition for coverage that led to the president's resignation, but the lesson for journalists was in Mr. Bradlee's fusion of doggedness, fearlessness and professionalism.

His management could be erratic, and he made mistakes, but Mr. Bradlee never tired of looking for the finest talent, both established and upcoming. Early on he lured David S. Broder from the New York Times and Haynes Johnson from the Washington Evening Star. They helped define the era. "The more we found, the hungrier we got," he recalled. He invented the Style section, capturing in the newspaper the magic of the "New Journalism" then popular in magazines - provocative, literary, probing, sassy and swashbuckling. He was impatient with mediocrity and flackery. He relished stylish writing and reporters who were fast off the mark.

What Mr. Bradlee built at The Post could not have been achieved without the support of the Graham family, which invested generously in his ambitions and courageously stood behind his editorial decisions. Katharine Graham named Mr. Bradlee managing editor in 1965, and their partnership and shared vision spanned a generation of growth in the newspaper's stature and profitability. Donald E. Graham, who did so much to lead the newspaper in the next generation, never forgot Mr. Bradlee's contribution. As he said at his retirement in 1991, "It's Bradlee's paper."

BEN BRADLEE, A HERO TO THE POST NEWSROOM (WP)

By Donald Graham

Washington Post, October 22, 2014

In the next few days you will hear real sadness from hundreds of people who work or used to work at The Post. I would like to tell you why we all loved Ben Bradlee so much - loved working for him, loved working with him - and why we felt he could make anything possible.

When my mother, Katharine Graham, picked Ben to be managing editor of The Post in 1965 and then executive editor in 1968 - her first significant action as publisher - the two of them held huge ambitions for the paper. Ben's ambition had taught him one thing: He had to work hard. "I knew it would take thousands of extra hours to begin to know what to do." But he had borne plenty of responsibility early in his life (he served as a officer on a destroyer in the Pacific in World War II), and as he wrote later: "I was aching to do it."

As he settled in, Kay Graham was watching. Never sure of herself and prone to second-guessing her judgment, she knew she had made the perfect choice. "He's there nights, he's there weekends," she told those around her. "And you should see the people he's hiring."

That was what Ben concentrated on: hiring. "There was so much I didn't know - about presses, about composing rooms, about budgets," Ben wrote, "that I decided to concentrate on the one thing I did know: good reporters."

They were good, and they were tough. Among his first hires were Richard Harwood, who had lost a lung in the invasion of Tarawa in 1943, and Ward Just, who would later be wounded in Vietnam. David Broder was another crucial early hire.

Bradlee roamed the building, prodding the production and advertising departments as well as the newsroom. He wanted to make things much better - now. He wasn't always right, but he helped Kay get a far better understanding of where the Post's problems lay.

It was perfect preparation for the paper's watershed moment: the 1971 decision to print the stories based on the Pentagon Papers. The New York Times had spent months preparing a series of stories based on these top-secret documents, but it was enjoined by a federal court from printing more after the first ones appeared. One day after the injunction was issued, Daniel Ellsberg gave the papers to The Post. Bradlee and his team were pushing hard to print their story the following day. But every lawyer in the place was opposed.

Ben knew the next step, the only step that would give Kay the confidence she needed to publish. Without authorization, he called a greater lawyer, his friend Edward Bennett Williams. They had met when Ben was a Post reporter covering the U.S. District Court in Washington and Ed was flamboyantly winning cases and building his reputation. Summoned by a note begging him to ask for a recess in a Chicago trial and call Bradlee, the football-loving Williams heard the story and said, "Christ, Benjy, you're behind 28-0, and it's the fourth quarter. You've got to print."

Williams, at the time, didn't represent The Post. But facing supremely high stakes (among other things, the Washington Post Co. was going public that week; there had also been a clear threat made to our television-station licenses), Kay decided to print the story. Days later, the Supreme Court ruled that the newspapers could not be prevented from doing so.

The outcome of the Pentagon Papers case bred a perfect confidence between editor and publisher. When the Watergate stories came along, there was unhesitating support for the newsroom's work. As Kay put it later, "He set the ground rules - pushing, pushing, pushing, not so subtly asking everyone to take one more step, relentlessly pursuing the story in the face of persistent accusations against us, and a concerted campaign of intimidation."

Usually, Ben told her in advance when a big story was breaking. Once during Watergate, he did not. When reporter Carl Bernstein called Attorney General John Mitchell to ask about his control of a secret fund used to gather information on the Democrats, Mitchell exploded. "Katie Graham's going to get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that's published." Ben didn't get around to calling his publisher. After the story ran, he told her, "That was too good to check with you, Katharine."

Through big stories and small - the Pentagon Papers and Watergate were only the beginning of it - those tough reporters on Ben's staff came to know they were working for someone great. You could safely call the Post newsroom staff hard-bitten. They were men and women who had no heroes. But he was their hero.

It went both ways. In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision on the Pentagon Papers, here's what he said to the newsroom: "The guts and energy and responsibility of everyone involved in this fight, and the sense that you were all involved, has impressed me more than anything in my life. You were beautiful."

You too, Benjy.

BEN BRADLEE WAS A LEADER AND A FRIEND (WP)

By Richard Cohen

Washington Post, October 21, 2014

Ben Bradlee would not have liked me to say so, but he was the living refutation of the Declaration of Independence: All men are not created equal. Certainly, he was not. He was born rich and well-connected, a member of the WASP tribe that once ran much of America and nearly all of its prestigious institutions. He was compellingly handsome and so smart that no crossword puzzle could really challenge him. It's not that he didn't have a weakness. He did. He was a sucker for the underdog.

If you could not be Ben Bradlee, then the next best thing was to be his friend. This was my unbounded good luck, and I watched him, always taking mental notes just to be a touch like him. I used to come into The Post's newsroom early, and so did Bradlee. We would talk in the empty newsroom, going over the news and some gossip, and this is how I learned the answer to the question so many people had: What were his politics? Surely, he was a liberal. When asked, I would shake my head no.

Bradlee believed only in fairness - that and a bespoke Anglican God with a Back Bay accent. He would bridle at the efforts of the rich, the connected and, especially, their children to steal in the ways the rich always have, through investments and control of institutions. "What is it with you, Bradlee?" I once asked him. "Why do you like to poke your finger into the eye of your own people?" He laughed. "I don't know. But I do."

He had another belief. As an editor, he believed in the story. Was it true? Was it good? Was it great? Watergate was both true and great and, really, he bet his career on the work of two young reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. That is well-known - a book, a movie, more books, even more movies.

Less known is that powerful people would call and complain about this or that article and Bradlee, with a lethal insouciance, would essentially say that the facts were the facts. I can't say he never killed a story (nothing important, that I know of), but the most chilling boasts of the powerful - "I can get that story killed" or "I know Ben Bradlee" - were never heard in Washington. If they really knew Bradlee, they knew their demands would be counterproductive. Threaten and the story would surely run. Hemingway, another newsman, popularized the phrase "grace under pressure." It applied to Bradlee. It was another way of saying guts.

That, in short, is the way he ran The Post. The story - in other words, the reader - was everything. When he retired, a Post reporter prepared a story about him. It was too heavy with references to Bradlee as a Georgetown grandee, a martini-swirling socialite. Bradlee was offended by the story. He was a great American newspaper editor - maybe the greatest - and a World War II veteran as well. His Georgetown house was beside the point. He showed me the story. I was appalled, but Bradlee would not intervene. Later, a senior editor modified the piece.

I got an email the other day saying that a column of mine had received 955 comments by 8 a.m. That's my world now, but it was never Bradlee's. He did not edit by the numbers, giving the readers more of what they already had. There was no such thing as "trending" for him. He edited by instinct, by experience, by his gut. He led. He did not follow, and when he retired the entire newsroom rose as one - a football field of talent Bradlee had assembled - and applauded. I was coming toward him as he walked out with his wife, Sally Quinn. Our eyes met. His had a tear in it. The word charismatic gets abused a lot, sometimes applied to politicians who get 51 percent of the vote. But Bradlee was the genuine article. Men were drawn to him, women, too, but that was a different matter. It's easy and sometimes squalid to be a ladies' man - not that Bradlee chose to be - but harder and rarer to be a leader of men, the kind of man whom other men both envy and follow. Bradlee had that quality, and he knew it, and when I mentioned it to him once, he said in that growly voice of his, "Eat your heart out, Cohen." I never did. It was simply too much fun just being with him.

Read more from Richard Cohen's archive.

BEARS AND WOLVES FIND A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS (WP)

By Kathleen Parker

Washington Post, October 21, 2014

If politicians preying upon your attentions this season fail to inspire, you might seek common cause with the beasts - the four-legged variety rather than those running for office.

Ballot initiatives aimed at protecting bears and wolves from hounding, trapping and other inhumane hunting practices are up for a vote in two states - Maine and Michigan.

Oh, be still thy twitching trigger finger. This isn't an anti-hunting column; it's a pro-humanity column. Ours. And the referendums, driven by the Humane Society of the United States, are aimed only at minimizing animal suffering and restoring a measure of decency and fair play in our dealings with creatures.

First the bears. Maine is the only state that still allows bear baiting, hounding and trapping. More than half of the 32 states with legal bear hunting allow hounding, a dozen allow baiting, and only Maine allows trapping for sport.

For clarification, hounding refers to the use of dogs that have been trained to chase bears relentlessly and then to corner or fight the poor beast. The bears have no choice but to turn to face a murderous pack or, exhausted, escape up a tree.

That's when the hunter, who, thanks to electronic tracking equipment, has been able to follow at a leisurely pace and safe distance, points his rifle and shoots the bear from a tree limb. Frances Macomber, the cowardly hunter of Hemingway's short, unhappy story, looks like a Maasai warrior by comparison.

Baiting means that a hunting guide strews rotting food in the woods and places a 55-gallon drum filled with jelly doughnuts, pizza, grease, fish guts and rotting beaver carcasses in a target spot. The "hunter," who likely has paid a fee to the "guide" for a "guaranteed kill," is provided a comfy

seat to wait for the bear. Bam!

It's ironic - or something - that the same state fish and wildlife agency folks who post signs warning tourists not to feed the bears will allow other tourists to feed them for about \$2,000 to \$4,000 a pop. New signage might read: Kill what you feed.

The problem with baiting, beyond the obvious, is that it perpetuates an unhealthy cycle that only creates more problems - growing the bear population and making the bruins too comfortable around human areas - that hunters then use to justify more baiting and shooting. Avid hunter and writer Ted Williams, who wrote about bear baiting for Audubon magazine in 2005, calls it "garbaging for bears."

Other states, such as Colorado, Oregon and Washington, meanwhile, have managed to maintain mostly stable bear populations without these inhumane practices. Plus, bear-hunting licenses in these states for fair-chase hunts have doubled or tripled.

A fair hunt may be more dangerous and require greater courage than shooting Winnie in a tree, but isn't that at least part of the point? It should be noted that the Maasai warrior, who carries a shield and a spear to hunt a lion, does sometimes lose.

In Michigan, wolves are the designated prey.

The Humane Society is campaigning there to stop the reopening of a wolf hunt, which has been deemed necessary largely because of human-wolf stories that were found to be false. In one true case, a farmer who lost several cattle to wolves had left several rotting cattle carcasses lying around. Talk about a baited field. Was he expecting squirrels?

Otherwise, the stories are mostly myths - wolves staring at humans through windows, stalking little girls in red capes, that sort of thing.

Although wolves have been removed from the endangered species list in Michigan, they number fewer than 650. Humane Society President and chief executive Wayne Pacelle fears that wolves will suffer the inhumane hunting practices - hounds and traps - seen in other states that are part of what he describes as "anti-wolf hysteria sweeping the Midwest."

Rather than leaving power in the hands of legislators and commissioners, Pacelle is urging voters to speak up through ballot initiatives. "We need to make a statement that the public - and not just trophy hunters - has a right to have a say in the protection of wildlife."

The referendum, by circumventing heavily lobbied legislators, sought to resonate with people who are disgusted with politics or who abhor cruelty to animals as sport. And, yes, often for food, but that's a subject for another day. In the meantime, we can safely say that nobody eats wolf. And nobody eats bear - twice.

Read more from Kathleen Parker's archive, follow her on Twitter or find her on Facebook.

A SMALL ORGANIZATION OFFERS A FRESH APPROACH ON PREVENTING TERRORISM (WP)

By David Ignatius

Washington Post, October 22, 2014

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates

Hedayah certainly doesn't look like a global counterterrorism center. It sits in a quiet villa on Fatima bint Mubarak Street here. It has a staff of 14. Its annual budget wouldn't begin to cover the cost of an Apache helicopter gunship.

This tiny international organization, whose Arabic name means "guidance," wants to be the softer face of the battle against such terror groups as the Islamic State. A brochure explains that if traditional counterterrorism efforts are perceived as soldiers with automatic weapons, Hedayah instead wants an image of kids sitting around a blackboard in a rural school.

Looking at the Middle East today, you'd have to say that the former approach, stressing soldiers with guns, hasn't been doing very well. Sectarian violence has devoured Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, and it's gnawing at surrounding nations.

So perhaps it's time to try the alternative approach of low-visibility groups such as Hedayah, whose 2014 budget was just \$6 million.

Hedayah was created in 2012 by the 29 countries in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which is chaired by the United States and Turkey. Member nations include many countries whose citizens have funded or exported radicalism, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The motivation was to share ideas, outside of existing intelligence and security partnerships, for

"redirection of terrorist support and potential recruits through non-coercive preventive measures." The organization doesn't even describe its mission as counterterrorism. Instead of "CT," its business is "CVE," which stands for "countering violent extremism." The nonsectarian approach extends to describing the office prayer room as the "all religion room."

Hedayah's non-coercive approach has unfortunately gotten more lip service than major support from participating nations. It holds meetings and seminars, but with so little money, its activities are limited. Maqsoud Kruse, the U.A.E. official who runs the group, says it has accomplished 15 percent of what it could do with more money and attention.

The Hedayah agenda stresses ways to avoid the radicalization process that leads people to embrace terrorism. The idea is prevention, rather than reaction. In the group's summary of last year's activities, the first item is "preventing education systems from becoming breeding grounds for violent extremism." In practical terms, this means stopping the use of madrassas and other religious schools as a training ground for jihadists.

Personally, I think there's a simple way to check the abuse of Islamic education. Saudi Arabia, whose funding for madrassas in such places as Afghanistan and Pakistan helped create a generation of potential religious warriors, must stop the practice. "No more foreign funding for madrassas" should be a demand of the nations that have joined the coalition against the Islamic State. Hedayah doesn't propose anything so radical, but it should.

A second priority for Hedayah is de-radicalization and rehabilitation of prisoners. "Prisons are potential terrorist networks," notes the group, because they have become places where radicals can recruit, indoctrinate and strategize.

Prisons have been especially important for the Islamic State, which freed thousands of well-indoctrinated inmates as it swept through Anbar and Mosul in Iraq. Here, Saudi Arabia provides a positive model: The kingdom has worked over the past decade to turn its al-Qaeda prisoners away from violence.

Two other preventive approaches are also noteworthy. Hedayah tries to encourage victims of terrorism to tell their stories, so that young people will hear a counternarrative to the heroic self-promotion of the jihadists. And it encourages community policing efforts around the world, so that local cops in New York City or Amsterdam or Riyadh will get tips from parents, friends or imams when young people become radicalized.

Hedayah's final goal involves using social media to combat extremism. This may be the most important mission, given the mastery that the Islamic State has shown in using the Internet to promote violent confrontation. Over the past decade, this virtual battle against extremism has typically been waged by secret intelligence and military agencies, or has been ignored. Neither approach makes sense. One European nation is pioneering a program in which visits to jihadist sites prompt automated anti-radicalization messages. That sends a dual message: We're watching, and do the right thing.

Let's be honest: It's too late to stop the radicalization of Islamic State fighters. The battle to "degrade and ultimately destroy" those recruits, unfortunately, will now be waged with Apache gunships and drones. But maybe their younger brothers and cousins can be deterred from violent extremism by programs like the ones that Hedayah is promoting.

A CALL TO ACTION FROM 'PATIENT ZERO' MONICA LEWINSKY (WP)

By Ruth Marcus

Washington Post, October 21, 2014

Monica Lewinsky is trying to make lemonade out of 16-year-old lemons. Good for her, and good, ultimately, for us.

Not so good, of course, for Hillary Clinton's nascent presidential campaign, but not fatal either. Lewinsky's decision to reemerge as a public figure, this time committed to alleviating the scourge of cyberbullying, is awkward.

Still, it is inevitable, even without Lewinsky front and center, that Bill Clinton's deplorable conduct in office will come up as a topic during his wife's campaign, assuming she gets to the general election this time. The earlier it's talked about, the more old-newsy the whole mess will seem by the time Clinton's opponents try to make it relevant.

In the meantime, Lewinsky is making an important point about the role of the Internet and accompanying modern technology as an accelerant in the destruction of personal reputation and

the associated harm caused by online exposure.

"Overnight, I went from being a completely private figure to a publicly humiliated one. I was Patient Zero," Lewinsky said in a speech Monday to Forbes's Under 30 Summit in Philadelphia. "The first person to have their reputation completely destroyed worldwide via the Internet."

Lewinsky's "Patient Zero" claim is more than a little overblown. Even without the medium of the Internet, without the Drudge Report to break the news on the Web or dial-up connections to let readers access the Starr report in all its detail, the story would have emerged, and it would have been huge.

Ask Donna Rice and Gary Hart. As Matt Bai has recently reminded us, Hart's presidential campaign was instantaneously destroyed and Rice's name became a household word, back when a mouse was a rodent and blog was a typo.

"Somehow, political and personal lives had collided overnight to create what was, in hindsight, the first modern political scandal, with all the attendant satellite trucks and saturation coverage and hourly turns in the narrative that Kafka himself could not have dreamed up," Bai writes in his book "All the Truth Is Out: The Week Politics Went Tabloid."

In truth, politics has always had its tabloid aspect. Grover Cleveland's critics chanted "Ma, Ma, where's my pa?" referring to an illegitimate child during the 1884 presidential campaign. And reputations have always been susceptible to overnight ruin.

But Lewinsky is also correct when she says that "the experience of shame and humiliation online is different than offline. There is no way to wrap your mind around where the humiliation ends - there are no borders."

She described how it felt "to watch yourself - or your name and likeness - be ripped apart online . . . For me, that was every day in 1998. There was a rotation of worsening name-calling and descriptions of me. I would go online, read in a paper or see on TV people referring to me as: tramp, slut, whore, tart, bimbo, floozy, even spy. The New York Post's Page Six took to calling me, almost daily, the Portly Pepperpot. I was shattered."

This is where Lewinsky's effort can be most helpful. Few of us, thankfully, will be subjected to a Lewinsky-level public shaming. But many of us, and many of our children, will suffer the cyber slings and arrows of Internet-enabled humiliation and abuse.

Since Lewinsky's moment, the mechanisms for humiliation and the venues for abuse have multiplied. Imagine Linda Tripp with a webcam and smartphone. Imagine the episode in the age of Twitter and Facebook.

Lewinsky says she was moved to come forward by the experience of Rutgers freshman Tyler Clementi, who committed suicide after his roommate secretly taped and streamed video of Clementi kissing another man.

"Having survived myself, what I want to do now is help other victims of the shame game survive too," Lewinsky said. "What we need is a radical change in attitudes - on the Internet, mobile platforms and in the society of which they are a part."

Indeed, the response to Lewinsky's speech - and to her decision, either courageous or foolhardy, to join Twitter - only serves to underscore the ugliness she decries. "#HereWeGo," Lewinsky wrote in her maiden tweet, and so the Twitverse did, in all its predictable coarseness.

If Lewinsky's solution to this "compassion deficit" feels unformed - well, she's not the only one who is struggling with how to re-civilize society. Simply going public may be Lewinsky's greatest service. A parent trying to comfort a teenager victimized by cyberbullies can point to Lewinsky and say: If she can survive, so can you.

Read more from Ruth Marcus's archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

MEET THE ONE DEMOCRAT WHO IS NOT RUNNING FROM OBAMA (WP)

By Dana Milbank

Washington Post, October 22, 2014

David Perdue took the cheap and easy route.

The Republican Senate candidate in Georgia, like Republican candidates in most other competitive races, calculated that the surest road to victory was to tie his opponent, in this case Democrat Michelle Nunn, to President Obama.

"The president himself said, 'make no mistake, these policies are on the ballot,'" Perdue said in a

TV ad last week. As a photo of Obama with Nunn filled the screen, Perdue continued: "That's why he wants her in the Senate."

It was typical of Perdue's campaign strategy of trying to run against Obama. What was not typical was Nunn's response: She ran a spot of her own, featuring the same photo of herself with Obama. "Have you seen this picture?" she asks viewers. "It's the one David Perdue has used to try and attack me in this campaign." As the image shifts to a photo of George H.W. Bush with his hand on her shoulder, Nunn goes on: "But what he doesn't tell you is that it was taken at an event honoring President Bush, who I worked for as CEO of his Points of Light Foundation. Throughout my career I've been able to work with Republicans and Democrats, and that's the same approach I'll bring to the U.S. Senate."

Nunn, daughter of the legendary Senate Democratic centrist Sam Nunn, may yet lose the race. But she is doing far better than expected in her run despite the hostile year and terrain for Democrats. A big reason for this: She's showing authenticity and courage at a time when both are in short supply among Democratic candidates.

Nunn's comfort in her own skin is in sharp contrast to other Democrats on the ballot, who are making awkward maneuvers to distance themselves from Obama and much of the Democratic Party.

In Kentucky, Democratic Senate candidate Alison Lundergan Grimes ran an ad declaring "I'm not Barack Obama." In Louisiana, an ad from Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu showed her saying "the administration's policies are simply wrong on oil and gas production."

Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska) boasted in an ad that he "took on Obama" on Arctic oil production and "voted against President Obama's trillion-dollar tax increase." (Actually, the vote was a Republican stunt.) Sen. Mark Pryor (D-Ark.) bragged of opposing gun restrictions Obama favored, proclaiming, "No one from New York or Washington tells me what to do."

And then there's Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) who skipped an Obama visit to his state and made the absurd claim that, at the White House, "the last person they want to see coming is me."

But running from Obama is dumb, both because it doesn't fool anybody and because it makes the candidate look shifty. Certainly, Obama is unpopular in the states that form this year's battlefield. But voters are savvy enough to know that Democratic lawmakers tend to support a Democratic president. And Obama seems to have a suicidal wish to remind Americans of this, telling liberal radio host Al Sharpton Monday that "these are all folks who vote with me."

The attempt to run from Obama only makes the runner look calculating at a time when voters are disgusted with anything that smells political. That helps to explain the Elizabeth Warren phenomenon. The Democratic senator from Massachusetts, a raging populist, is far more liberal than Obama. Yet she's in demand as a surrogate for Democrats even in places such as Kentucky and West Virginia.

As The Post's Paul Kane noted, she's campaigning for Senate candidates in Minnesota, Iowa and Colorado this week, and candidates are clearly not afraid to stand with her as she delivers her fist-pumping jeremiad against Republicans and wealthy interests.

Contrast that with Kentucky's Grimes, who had a promising start but has turned into a feckless candidate. She repeatedly refused to say whether she even voted for Obama, actually claiming during a debate last week that she wouldn't "compromise a constitutional right" by revealing this secret.

The day after that preposterous dodge, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee said it was stopping advertising in Kentucky - essentially an acknowledgment that Grimes would lose - and was buying advertising time in support of Nunn in Georgia.

Republicans tried to play the same game with Nunn, but she didn't make Grimes's mistake. "I did vote for the president," she told The Post's Ed O'Keefe.

Of course she did. She's a Democrat, and she's not going to insult voters' intelligence by pretending otherwise. If that causes her to lose in Georgia, she at least will have kept her dignity.

Twitter: @Milbank

Read more from Dana Milbank's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES:

RACIAL PARITY WILL TRANSFORM DELAWARE BY 2060 (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Northernmost Delaware's racial and ethnic mix now appears headed toward parity by the year 2060 with the diversity now found in Philadelphia or the Dallas and Houston areas, new population projections show.

The change would be part of a projected century-long trend that already has made it more likely than not that any random encounter in Kent or New Castle counties, or in the state as a whole, will involve a person of a different racial or ethnic group.

USA Today commissioned a nationwide demographic analysis to produce similar assessments for every county in the nation, using a 0-to-100 Diversity Index scale that reflects the random chance of meeting someone different. By 2060, forecasters concluded, nationwide odds of bumping into someone of the same race or ethnicity will be less than 1 in 3.

Even rural areas that as recently as 1960 were virtually all white are changing dramatically.

Relatively rural spots like Cecil and Dorchester counties in Maryland or Cumberland County, N.J., along Delaware Bay are now expected to have populations even more diverse than New Castle County's 50 year's hence.

In nearby Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the chances of encountering a non-white resident were only 3 percent in 1960. Now the odds are nearly 30 percent, and by 2060 will move to just better than even, though still trailing the country.

"You can see the direction that things are heading," said Edward C. Ratledge, a University Delaware professor and director of the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research. "It's the same thing throughout the country. It's a more diverse population than ever. The question is: What does it say about the point when the minorities are a majority."

According to the projections, Delaware will rank as the 15th most-diverse state in the country by 2060, with New Castle County's racial and ethnic mix rising to the top 6 percent of counties nationwide. In contrast, Sussex County - once the state's most racially mixed - began trailing in diversity in the 1980s and 1990s as largely white resort-area and retirement populations swelled; it is expected to still have a 64 percent white population in 2060.

Forecasts for the rest of the Delmarva Peninsula are similar, if less extreme. They quickly lead to questions about how the population will blend, or not blend, below the broad-brush county-level statistics, and how areas and neighborhoods will look in a state where racial and ethnic segregation is a fact of life.

Kent and New Castle counties are among the 11 percent of counties nationwide where the Diversity Index already has crossed the 50 percent threshold. By 2060, both will be among the 13.8 percent of counties with a 67 percent or greater "hyperdiversity."

Wicomico and Worcester counties in Maryland, where Salisbury and Ocean City lie, respectively, will cross that same hyperdiversity line between 2050 and 2060.

No group will increase faster than Hispanic residents, expected to account for about 16 percent of New Castle and Sussex County's population by 2060, twice the present share. And no group will decline more rapidly than non-Hispanic white residents, already in the minority in some areas, including Colonial School District.

Poll: How do you think Delaware will adjust to growing diversity in th...

Among the more-prominent forecasts:

- The state's overall white population will drop from 71 percent in 2010 to 59 percent in 2060, with non-Hispanic whites expected to become a minority.
- The number of Hispanic residents in Delaware will be more than 2.6 times higher than today, growing from nearly 8 percent currently to 15 percent, with the more-than 193,000 statewide Hispanic total in 2060 exceeding the entire 2010 population of either Sussex County or Kent County.
- About 6.6 times more residents will identify themselves as being of two or more races.
- Although the number of black residents will increase by nearly 53 percent, their share of the statewide population will move only from 22 to 24 percent.
- The number of residents identifying themselves as Asian or American Indian will increase, but not as fast as other racial and ethnic groups. The state's Asian population will decline as a

percentage of the total from 3.2 percent in 2010 to 2.8 percent in 2060.

American Indian residents, led by Delaware's Nanticoke Indian tribe members, and Pacific Islanders remain at only a fraction of a percent of the population.

Sussex County, more diverse than the rest of the state in 1960, lost ground by 1990 as the pace of Baby Boomer retirements and better off white residents moved in. Although the poultry industry's expansion fed a huge growth in laborers through immigration, especially from Guatemala, overall diversity in Sussex is not expected to cross the 50 percent mark before 2030.

But already densely-populated New Castle County will grow far more slowly than the rest of the state, with increases in other groups coming at the expense of those identifying themselves solely as white.

By 2060, the "White Only" population of New Castle County will be 9 percent lower than today - the only group expected to decline in absolute numbers in Delaware.

The total for black residents will increase significantly in absolute numbers, but that group's share of the total will grow more slowly than the multi-racial and Hispanic groups.

"There are questions about what the impacts of increased diversity are going to be in pretty much every major institution," said Barrett A. Lee, who directs the sociology department and Population Research Institute at Penn State University. "What are the consequences for local economies, politics, health care? How are increases in diversity going to affect things like civic engagement, or relations among racial or ethnic groups?"

Rural Kent County resident and small business owner Deborah J. Torrijos heartily agrees with predictions that Hispanic residents will increase their share of Delaware's population over the next 50 years, but considers the estimates low.

"Too conservative," says Torrijos, a legal and health care interpreter. "I believe that the numbers now are inaccurate, and that there actually are more Hispanics here than the Census counted."

"I think acceptance in the general population has grown," Torrijos added. "There are always people who are reluctant to accept different cultures or languages. It depends on what circles that day you're running in. To be honest, I still encounter some bigotry or insensitivity of culture from people who say 'You should speak English.'"

Delaware's Indo-Asian population, concentrated in northern Delaware, began to grow in the early 1970s as student enrollments from that country increased at the University of Delaware.

"The number of people from southern Asia has really grown in the last 8 to 10 years, and the community support has gotten better," said Gopal Bhagia, a leading member of the Indo-American Association of Delaware. "We're recognized now within the local communities that we work with. That recognition has increased tremendously."

The Census Bureau uses "Asian" as an umbrella term to take in those with heritages ranging from Pakistan and India to China, the Philippines, Japan and Malaysia. Likewise for the less-obvious factors that seem to prop up the white population, a category that includes citizens of Middle Eastern and North African descent.

In practice, Indian-Americans and Indian immigrants accounted for about 41 percent, or 12,000, of the state's roughly 30,000-member Asian population on average between 2008 and 2012 according to the Census Bureau. Those from China represented about 11 percent, Filipino another 7 percent.

Delaware lies in the heart of the region that is becoming "increasingly multi-hued, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic," according to a study on nationwide trends led by Penn State's Barrett Lee and released in late 2012.

"The most diverse communities in the U.S. are disproportionately western, southern, and coastal metropolitan areas and their principal cities and suburbs," the report noted. It added that the trend is both pervasive and a regular source of "debate, if not rancor."

Lee said separately: "We don't know if there will be a lot of unresolved issues. We don't have a crystal ball to figure out if increased diversity is going to lead to more conflict and competition for resources."

While immigration already is a frequently mentioned issue, Lee added, much more is at work.

"Many people think it's all about immigration. But even if there was some reason, or if we could magically turn off the immigration faucet today, the population would still become more and more diverse over time," Lee said, "partly because much of the increasing diversity is due to natural increases within those groups."

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wj0zYc>

ODOR-PLAGUED COMPOST PLANT ORDERED TO SHUT DOWN (WILNJ)

By Jeff Montgomery

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

State environmental regulators have ordered the shutdown of an industrial scale composting plant near the Port of Wilmington that critics say produced a years-long siege of foul odors affecting tens of thousands.

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary David Small said he would decline to re-issue a needed five-year "beneficial use" recycling determination for Peninsula Compost LLC's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center along Christiana Avenue.

As of Tuesday, the company was prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

"It's disappointing, but it was clear that the facility was causing an undue burden on the communities in close proximity to the facility, the city of Wilmington and parts of New Castle County," Small said.

"The inability to maintain compliance by this facility and the implications, most specifically the odor impacts to the community, had just gotten to a point where it was no longer acceptable," Small said.

Rep. James Johnson, D-New Castle, said that Small called him shortly after noon to tell him of the decision.

"The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years," Johnson said. "It's a relief to have a good answer."

Peninsula's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center opened the \$20 million facility in late 2009, aiming to convert up to 160,000 tons yearly of spoiled, discarded and outdated food and other castoffs into marketable compost. The company intended to use a rapid, under-cover composting method and tight process and raw material controls.

That intent was soon knocked off track by unwanted materials in the center's supply streams, operating troubles and a weak economy, among other factors. At one point, backlogged piles of compost caught fire and sent cloying smoke across the Port of Wilmington, briefly shutting it down. Complaints about the plant's distinctive odor surfaced in nearby disadvantaged neighborhoods, and eventually spread across the city, north to Brandywine Hundred and even across the Delaware River, to Pennsville, New Jersey.

As recently as Monday, regional developer Robert Buccini, with Buccini Pollin Group said the stench "hurts economic growth throughout the city." BPG's headquarters stands northwest of the plant site, in the path of odors.

Hours before Johnson's report, northeast Wilmington resident Brenda Watson said she was "hoping and praying" that the trouble ends.

"The smell is too much," Watson said. "In the summertime, you want to save on the expense of the air conditioner in the evening so you put in a window fan, but the smell is so bad you have to shut everything all the time."

"It's unbelievable," Watson added. "I took a bus trip to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a few weeks ago, and as soon as we got to 12th Street coming back, I knew where we were because of the smell."

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1tJ6KUv>

DELAWARE BUSINESSES STOCKPILE ROAD SALT (WILNJ)

By Melissa Nann Burke

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 20, 2014

Unlike some agencies, DelDOT did not run out of road salt last winter, but turned down requests to share its salt stockpile.

After exhausting their supplies of road salt last winter - or coming close - businesses and cities in the region are stockpiling extra in case of another super snowy season.

The Port of Wilmington will import roughly 350,000 metric tons of salt before year's end, and is on

pace to handle 800,000 to a million tons of salt this year to meet demands Delaware, South Jersey and the five-county Philadelphia region, said Jeff Koetitz, director of operations for Port Contractors Inc., a materials- and cargo-handling firm.

That's compared to 250,000 tons that passed through the port in 2013. Much of the salt is road-grade, but not all. It comes from Mexico, Egypt, Chile, Spain, the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

"Everyone's all hyped up," Koetitz said. "Let's just hope it snows."

Workers at the port last week were unloading a portion of a 40,000-ton shipment from Chile when U.S. Sen. Chris Coons and Delaware Economic Development Director Alan Levin toured the vessel with port officials.

The bulk of the salt was transferred to dump trucks and hauled to Oceanport LLC, a rock salt company in Claymont, for storage, Koetitz said.

"How long can you store salt?" Coons asked.

"A long time - years," replied Michael Evanko, president of Port Contractors. "It does get hard. Sometimes, we have to break it up and crush it."

Chemical Equipment Labs, a salt provider in Marcus Hook, tries to keep about 200,000 tons of salt on hand at most times to supply its customers, which range from apartment buildings to office complexes to landscapers, CEO Edward Morgan said. This year, the company expects to order an additional 500,000 tons during the season, he said.

"The longest we kept several piles was when there was no snow for about three years. That was brutal," Morgan told Coons. "We sold everything we had last year."

Snowfall totals last winter made the record books in many areas, blowing through cities' snow-removal budgets and causing salt shortages when demand exceeded locally available supplies.

The supply chain choked when municipalities around the country tried to simultaneously replenish dwindling stockpiles after successive snow and ice storms. Shipments from salt flats in places such as Chile can take two to three weeks. In some places, ice-clogged rivers blocked the passage of barge traffic.

"In times like last year, they just can't get it in quick enough. There's logistics issues," Morgan said.

The Delaware Department of Transportation benefits from proximity to the Port of Wilmington, when compared with inland DOTs and road-salt customers, officials said.

"Last winter, many states had problems moving the salt to where they needed it," said Jim Westhoff, a DelDOT spokesman.

DelDOT did not run out of road salt, but turned down requests to share its stockpile, worrying about getting too low.

The agency currently has more than 43,150 tons of salt stockpiled, and doesn't have the capacity to store much more. DelDOT is responsible for treating 89 percent of Delaware roadways, and typically uses 13,000 tons of salt during severe storms.

"We have no plans for any considerable increase in the amount of salt we stockpile," Westhoff said. "However, we are working on adding some additional storage capacity in Sussex County, to reduce our travel time if we have an event in Sussex, and need a great deal of road salt there."

Crews at maintenance yards in the three counties are preparing for snow equipment inspections, which begin this week, said Brian Urbanek, assistant director of support services for DelDOT.

Mechanics will be checking the hydraulic lines, headlights, horns and salt spreaders among the elements of 333 snow plows.

Last week, the agency offered equipment operators a chance to brush up on their snow-plowing skills in a computer simulator set up in Dover. More than 120 DelDOT employees participated, in addition to dozens of operators from towns and counties around the state.

With three large displays representing the windshield and windows, the simulator program runs the driver through different storm scenarios. The streetscape varies from urban to rural. Drivers must react quickly to successfully navigate obstacles from poor visibility, to slippery roadways, to darting pedestrians and deer.

"There's lots of things going on out there when we're pushing snow. Cars don't put their turn signals on, or they pull out in front of you. People don't realize this truck doesn't stop on a dime," said Gary Licisko, who plows a route in the Seaford area.

"This is a good training exercise, especially for new operators. But nothing is going to get exactly like the real thing."

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DEL. TREASURER RACE GETS PERSONAL (WILNJ)

By Jonathan Starkey

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Drew Wilson, Barney's campaign manager, made the comments by email after Barney's campaign accused Simpler of continuing to "attack and demean" the Democrat's military experience at a Millsboro candidate forum hosted by the American Legion last week.

Simpler's campaign manager, Jim Gibbons, criticized Barney for "mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler," saying "we are proud of the campaign we've run."

The latest back-and-forth could be evidence of concern among Democrats. Internal polling shows Simpler leading Barney about two weeks before Delawareans vote on Nov. 4, according to Democratic and Republican sources.

Privately, Democrats express concern that Barney could lose despite a 125,000 Democratic voter registration advantage statewide.

Simpler is a former investment fund manager and chief financial officer of his family's Rehoboth-based hotel management business who has focused his campaign for state treasurer on his money management experience.

Barney is a former policy aide to Gov. Jack Markell and U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, and a former Marine who served and was severely wounded in Iraq. The Democrat has called attention to his military background, saying it is evidence of his commitment to public service.

Simpler's campaign has not targeted Barney's military service as an issue. At the Millsboro forum last Wednesday, in fact, Simpler praised Barney for serving.

But the Republican did invoke Barney's military background while criticizing Barney for going negative. Simpler made the comments during the closing moments of a debate held on Sept. 11 at the Siegel Jewish Community Center in Talleyville.

"H

e has gone around saying that he wants to be treated like a hero. He should start acting like one and stop listening to his political handlers who are giving him terrible advice about how to prosecute a campaign," Simpler said while reacting to a campaign attack from Barney that misrepresented his position on Medicare.

"

We do not need....another Democrat who is a political opportunist looking for a platform," Simpler added. "We want someone who wants to do this job with the highest degree of professionalism." In recent days, Barney criticized Simpler for comments in Millsboro that he says inappropriately equated Simpler's skills as a finance manager with the "specialized skills" used by doctors to save Barney's life after he was severely wounded by a gunshot in 2006 in Iraq.

"I want to honor the veterans here who have given us service and I want to honor my opponent as well. And I note that he said something very important, that he wouldn't be here with us today but for people who had highly specialized training," Simpler said, according to an unofficial transcript.

"Training matters. Special skills matter. For the last four years we had Treasury managed by someone who has an excellent academic resume and who has a successful law practice, but he has absolutely no financial background."

Wilson, Barney's campaign manager, said Simpler's comments are evidence of a "serious character flaw. He can't recognize the difference between a life devoted to secretly managing money for millionaires and the 11+ years of training that go into saving lives under fire by becoming a military surgeon."

Gibbons, Simpler's campaign manager, said Barney's attacks are evidence that the Democrat is not connecting with voters.

"Sean Barney has had months to make his case to voters, and has simply failed to do so. Voters know that Sean has no finance experience," Gibbons said. "As a result, he is now desperate and can resort only to mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler.

Delawareans don't want that kind of politics and we are not going there."

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TOP 9 PROJECTS THAT NEED FUNDING (WILNJ)

By Jonathan Starkey

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation in August that parks officials hope will help chip away at a \$100 million capital projects backlog that has built up in state parks.

The new law allows state officials to invest parks and open space money more aggressively, using a new endowment to fund outdoor development and stewardship.

Here are the top nine projects that need funding, according to parks officials. Some cost estimates, including the cost for renovations at the popular Killens Pond waterpark, represent only the first phase of larger projects.

Not all of these projects will find funding under the new plan signed by Markell, but here's the wish list:

1. Cape Henlopen State Park: Sewer system upgrades, \$2 million

Necessary relining work on Cape Henlopen's sewer system is the parks system's number-one priority.

2. Killens Pond State Park: Waterpark renovations, \$2.8 million

Lawmakers and parks officials have pointed to the need to renovate the main pool, install new slides, add spray facilities, improve bathroom facilities and more. The cost here represents phase one of \$12 million in planned upgrades.

3. Fort Delaware State Park: Tram path repairs, \$100,000

The path is eroding on the sides into the marsh and presenting a hazard in accessing the fort, especially at night, parks officials say.

4. Auburn Heights Preserve: Retrofit sprinkler system, \$75,000

The sprinkler and freeze proof systems protect a collection of antique cars housed in the museum in Yorklyn. The current system is having clogging issues.

5. Bellevue State Park: Demolition of indoor tennis center, \$1.6 million

The cost of this project increased two-fold because of large amounts of asbestos found inside and concerns about protecting a historic school house that is attached. The state is also worried about trespassers in this high-traffic area of a busy park.

6. Brandywine Creek State Park: Rocky Run Bridge, \$600,000-\$800,000

The bridge on one of the state's most popular hiking trails was washed out during a series of storms. Completion of this project is expected in early 2015. A temporary structure will be installed in two weeks.

7. Wilmington State Parks: Overhaul of H. Fletcher Brown Park, \$1.5 million

State officials are working with the Rotary on a renovations plan that will include accessibility upgrades, gathering areas, preservation of historic monuments and a greening of the landscape. They are also seeking federal funding.

8. Fort DuPont State Park: Shop upgrades, \$60,000

The park's shop, critical to the maintenance of Fort DuPont, Fort Delaware, Grassdale and Port Penn sites, has no running water and is prone to flooding. The projects will likely exceed these initial cost estimates.

9. Lums Pond State Park: Campground utility upgrades, \$4.7 million

The state wants to add electricity to camping sites, to allow campers to charge phones, speakers, lights and other accessories requiring power. They are also looking at adding sewer for some campsites, exploring sewer treatment plant improvement, and considering adding cabins to the park. Some parts of this plan could move forward without full funding.

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RODEL REPORT PUSHES PERSONALIZED LEARNING (WILNJ)

By Matthew Albright

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Some Delaware teachers are working on classrooms of the future, but the state needs to make

some big changes before every student can learn in one.

These are the main conclusions of a blueprint released Tuesday by the Rodel Teacher Council, a group of educators from all three counties assembled by the Rodel Foundation of Delaware, a think-tank dedicated to improving the state's education system.

The report offers suggestions for how to personalize learning for students using technology and alternative models for schools and classrooms.

Take council member Jennifer Hollstein's English class at the Charter School of Wilmington. Students work on research papers, using online resources such as UDLive or TED Talks on their computers. Hollstein monitors their progress on her laptop, approving timelines and research notes.

"Not only are they no longer limited by their library, they're not limited by a classroom structure that tells them how to do everything," Hollstein said.

If Delaware can get to the point where every classroom looks more like Hollstein's, the state could move away from a traditional grade-level model to a "competency-based" approach, where students advance once they've mastered concepts, the report suggests.

The goal is to create an educational system in which every student learns at their own pace, so that advanced students can more easily work through high school material and start earning college credits while less-advanced students aren't left struggling with a concept just because lesson plans have moved on, the report says.

"We really want to reach the kids who feel disenfranchised by school," said Michelle Johnson, a gifted and talented teacher at Towne Point Elementary School in Dover.

But if this idea is going to gain any traction, there will need to be big changes, the report says.

To make personalized learning widespread, states and districts would need to change the structure for earning course credits away from grade levels towards mastery of ideas. Schools would need more flexibility in "seat time" rules, so that students can spend time on the subjects they need the most help with, not the ones that happen to fall in a certain grade.

Teachers also would need to be trained in the new system, both in new technological tools and a new style of managing classrooms.

"If you go into a classroom that's doing this right, it can look a little chaotic, because everybody's working on their own," Hollstein said. "It's a different way of thinking about the classroom."

Though it's unlikely all these changes will happen immediately, some districts are working together to try to find ways to make personalized learning work.

The BRINC consortium, a coalition of the Brandywine, Indian River, Colonial and New Castle County Vo-Tech districts, has been investing time and money into helping teachers and information technology staffs

"We know the state is looking at this and we all know this is coming in the future," said council member Robyn Howton, an English teacher at Mt. Pleasant High School. "We want to keep pushing this as an issue that needs to be talked about."

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Read or Share this story: ><http://delonline.us/1wj3tJo><

TIME FOR SOME REASONS TO FEEL #DELAPROUD (WILNJ)

By Jeffrey Gentry

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

It's been a few weeks since we discussed feeling #delaproud about anything, so I thought we could do that today.

First, let's go ahead and scratch Hunter Biden off the list for this discussion. That little failed drug test for the Navy was a real dumb move on his part.

This might be a shocker, but I'm #delaproud of Wilmington Mayor Dennis P. Williams and his decision to form a homicide unit. Is it going to make a difference or is it just a renaming of a group of people who will do what they were doing before? Who knows. But it was good to see something the community felt would make a difference come to fruition.

How about being #delaproud of the hundreds of Newark High School students who DID NOT get involved in multiple brawls at the school on Monday. We've heard about the dozen or so arrests.

I'm #delaproud of those of you who stayed out of it.

Definitely feeling #delaproud of Nasai Oliver, the 12-year-old Cab Calloway student who opened a lemonade stand at the corner of Jessup Street and Vandever Avenue in Wilmington. Originally done to raise money for a pair of Nike Air Jordan sneakers, Oliver kept the stand open and earned enough for the shoes, his back-to-school wardrobe and plans to give a portion to charity. Oliver's positive attitude has quickly become an example for others.

How about being #delaproud of the hard-working scientists at the DuPont Co.'s Experimental Station going back to the 1950s. Their work has contributed to what has become a key weapon in the Ebola fight - personal protection apparel.

Feeling #delaproud about the state's farmers. The recent tragic accident in Middletown served as a horrible reminder of how dangerous the occupation remains today.

Newark's Ronaldo Tello Marzol deserves a #delaproud shoutout. The editor general of Delaware Hispano, a Spanish-language magazine he started here, won the Trailblazer Businessperson of the Year award at the recent Hispanic Choice Awards in Philadelphia, honoring businesspeople and community leaders in the region.

And finally, I'm #delaproud of all 20 teachers chosen as finalists to be Delaware's next State Teacher of the Year, especially Megan Szabo, a 7th and 8th grade science teacher at Postlethwait Middle School. Szabo was named State Teacher of the Year Tuesday night.

Have some #delaproud things you'd like to share? Send them my way by email or drop by my Facebook page at >www.facebook.com/jeffreygentryTNJMG< and let me know. I may share yours in a future column.

Share in the Only in Delaware conversation 24/7 on [delawareonline](http://delawareonline.com). Contact Jeffrey Gentry at jgentry@delawareonline.com. Follow him on Twitter: @jeffreygentry

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WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS:

WHAT DELAWAREANS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EBOLA (WILNJ)

By Karyl Rattay

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Dear Delawarean,

Because of the diagnosis of individuals in Dallas with Ebola virus and the subsequent intense media coverage, I know people are concerned. As Delaware's State Health Officer, I want to help Delawareans separate the facts from fiction and to know what is being done in Delaware in the event that we have the Ebola virus in our state. And I want people to know where to turn if they have concerns or questions.

The tragic epidemic of the Ebola virus infection in West Africa continues to unfold. Particularly affected are the countries of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Recently, the Ebola virus was transmitted to two nurses from an ill Liberian man in Dallas, Texas. The man subsequently passed away, and the nurses are still hospitalized. The two women contracted the illness due to a combination of direct contact with a severely ill individual and a presumed break in hospital personal protection measures.

None of the community contacts of the man who passed away in Dallas became ill, including his family and friends. The other health care workers who treated him are still under observation and will remain so until the 21-day incubation period passes.

Based on currently available information, Ebola virus is only transmitted by patients who have symptoms, and the risk of getting the disease through normal, everyday contact is very low. The people being monitored by health officials in other states who came into brief contact with the three ill people in Texas or on an airplane, are being monitored as an extra precaution, not because there is a high risk of a genuine large spread of the illness. And, the close family and friends of the man who passed away in Texas were just released from monitoring as the incubation period has passed and no one became ill.

As you move through your day, remember this virus, and many other viruses, can be killed through careful hand-washing and alcohol-based sanitizers.

To become ill with Ebola, a person must come into direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of an infected individual. Ebola symptoms occur after an incubation period of two to 21 days and

include:

- Fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius)
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising
- Muscle pain

The Delaware Division of Public Health has been actively preparing for a potential Ebola illness in Delaware. While the risk is low for Delaware, it is important to be prepared for any situation. DPH has been working with medical providers, hospitals, some employers, EMS and other partners to ensure they are ready. DPH is particularly focused on ensuring medical partners can immediately recognize a potential case and handle the patient appropriately.

All Delaware hospitals have confirmed the ability to manage Ebola patients. That means they have put in place plans to isolate patients with Ebola, and are training on practices to protect health care workers. If a case is confirmed in Delaware, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention special team will immediately be placed on the ground to help DPH trace any potential contacts whom may also need to be isolated and help to determine if the ill patient should be moved out of state for treatment.

I know Delawareans have questions about what they should do if they suspect a person they encounter might be infected with Ebola virus. First, it is important we don't make assumptions that someone might be infected based on their accent, background or skin color, and it is important to remember how hard the disease is to get.

If you or a loved one start to show symptoms you find concerning, call your health care provider. Flu season has started in Delaware. Flu and several travel-related illnesses including malaria, typhoid fever and dengue, are much more common than Ebola. The symptoms of all these diseases are very similar.

If you wish to discuss a suspected case, you may contact DPH at (888) 295-5156 Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or (302) 744-4700 after 4:30 p.m., weekends and holidays. If you have general questions, the CDC has a 24/7 line available for general questions on the Ebola virus and can be reached by calling (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

I hope I have helped to address concerns you may have. The attached fact sheet is provided for more information. Visit dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/index.html for additional information.

Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, is the director of Delaware's Public Health Department of Health and Social Services.

Read or Share this story: ><http://delonline.us/1wiybCB><

AN END TO THE STENCH COULD FINALLY MEAN FRESH AIR (WILNJ)

Wilmington (DE) News Journal, October 21, 2014

Finally, residents living within smelling range of an industrial-scale composting plant got some long overdue sweet news about their neighborhood's atmosphere Tuesday. It will soon be over.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, prodded by the evidence of the stink pollution and political leaders' advocacy on behalf of frustrated residents, has ordered the doors of the site closed.

The company is now prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

How bad was it? Real bad, and for the last seven years. The odor did not just hover over the nearby homes and businesses. It traveled beyond the lower-income neighborhoods that bordered the site into downtown Wilmington and across the river to Pennsville, New Jersey.

How bad was it? At one time, backlogged piles of compost caught fire, with smoking foul odor shutting down the entire Port of Wilmington.

Complaints have been consistent since soon after the plant began operating on a full schedule in 2009. The \$20 million site can convert up to 160,000 tons of spoiled, outdated food into what's described as "marketable compost."

However, not even closing their doors and sealing their windows shut kept out the odor that settled

in the atmosphere of the nearby residents' homes. This was stagnant air pollution, made worse by the fact that Peninsula ran into unwanted materials and debris in the plant's supply streams. A problem likely not of their fault, but one they had difficulty in resolving. And yet the site kept its permit. It kept functioning and assaulting the neighborhoods with foul odor. Then word came of the closing.

On Monday, a recent New Jersey transplant to the area sent this note to The News Journal Editorial Board.

"If you are looking for a great story...cover the unbearable stench that is always lingering on the Southbridge side from the dumping of what I believe is waste and chemicals. Of course! It is located on the highly populated side of blacks and Latino communities. Frustrating. ... gagging smell. The company's rather pay the fine every time and not rectify the issue and shut it down! "Wonder why it's a high cancer rate in Delaware? I feel like Erin Brockovich. You have to smell it for yourself to feel my disbelief and frustration."

No, we don't. Finally, DNREC ordered the needed shutdown, based on overwhelming evidence. Now those residents and workers in south Wilmington have the long-sought-after relief they deserve.

State Rep. James Johnson, who represents the area, said of the decision: "The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years. It's a relief to have a good answer."

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VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

PRODUCED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014 -- 6:15 AM EDT

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Experts Discuss Technology's Role In Future Of Transportation

By Ashley Halsey

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Ask a transportation expert what America needs right now and you'll get a fairly simple answer: better roads and bridges, enhanced public transit and improved rail lines, ports and airports. Ask a transportation expert how Americans will get from place to place in 20 years, and often the answer is a lot less certain.

If that seems like a disconnect — surely what we need today will be in use for a couple of decades — there is a one-word explanation for the quiver in experts' voices when they talk about transportation's future:

Technology.

It has revolutionized transportation just as it has forever changed most other aspects of life, and in the years to come it promises to take transportation to a dozen forks in the road.

That was one aspect made clear at a wide-ranging conference of transportation experts brought together in downtown Washington on Tuesday by The Washington Post.

The conference attendees heard from mayors, past and present U.S. secretaries of transportation, Vice President **Biden** and a bevy of fellow experts, most with their own vision of the future.

The central theme for most was the critical importance of investing in the nation's tattered infrastructure to keep the United States competitive in the global market. Finding the funding to do that as revenue from the traditional gas tax dwindles was a subset of that conversation, with several suggesting a move to a mileage-based fee or tolling on interstate highways.

When it comes to a vision for the future that lies just over the horizon, there were many ideas tossed out that made certainty a bit elusive.

Technology has spread so rapidly through virtually all modes of transportation that the challenge is in determining how it will continue to transform the future. At few times in history has the pace of change come so quickly.

Questions that arose — without firm answers — from the presentations Tuesday included:

- If autonomous vehicles — driverless cars — are just over the horizon, will drivers who no longer drive still need insurance? Or will vehicles and their manufacturers be covered by product-liability policies?

- Will highways of the future need things such as road signs or guardrails, since the cars know where they are going and will stay between the white lines?

- If electric cars are a major part of the future — Tesla was represented at the conference — will there still be a need for a gas station every few blocks?

- With autonomous cars able to toddle off and park themselves, will there be a need for vast acres of underground parking garages in downtown areas such as the District's where land is at a premium?

- When the last parking meters wear out and disappear, and cars begin to park themselves and pay for the space electronically, will parking tickets become a thing of the past? And what will replace the ticket revenue that cities have come to count on?

- Will public transit be less popular when autonomous cars can deliver their passengers that "last mile" from the transit stop to the front door?

- Will magnetic levitation trains running through tunnels deep underground carry passengers at 300 mph?

- And will cars fly?

A prototype of a flying car sat on 14th Street NW outside the conference.

“Hopefully we can use these technologies we’ve talked about here at the conference and change some things,” said flying-car developer Carl Dietrich, head of Terrafugia, whose Web site says that it “intends to lead the creation of a new flying car industry.”

In an allusion to the prospect that packages may be delivered to homes by unmanned drones, Dietrich asked: “How many years will it take of seeing your packages flying above you before we say, ‘Hey, we could be up there?’ “

More Prefer Public Transit To Road Building

By Ryan Struyk

[ABC News](#), October 22, 2014

Americans in an ABC News/Washington Post poll favor expanded public transportation options over road building in government efforts to reduce traffic congestion. But where they live makes a difference.

Overall, 54 percent prefer focusing on public transit, such as trains and buses, while four in ten say the government should focus on expanding and building roads instead. Preference for public transit, though, ranges from 61 percent of urban residents to 52 percent of suburbanites and 49 percent of people in rural areas.

See PDF with full results here.

The results come as Vice President Joe **Biden** and six mayors from major U.S. cities are scheduled to attend a Washington Post forum today on relieving traffic congestion.

There are other differences among groups. Preference for a focus on public transit peaks at two in three liberals and six in ten college graduates, as well as among nonwhites, people under age 40, those in the top income category, \$100,000-plus, and political independents.

Other groups have a slight preference for road building: strong conservatives, evangelical white Protestants and white men without a college degree.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 4-7, 2014, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell phone-only respondents. Results have a 3.5 point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York.

Joe Biden Reveals His ‘Biggest Regret’

By T. Becket Adams

[Washington Examiner](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** said Tuesday that he regrets that several states with Republican governors rejected the billions of taxpayer dollars set aside by the economic stimulus bill of 2009 for high-speed rail and that most of the money went to California.

“My biggest regret was I got the president to put billions of dollars into the Recovery Act for high-speed rail,” **Biden** said during a speech addressing transportation and infrastructure spending.

Gov. Rick Scott, R-Fla., “turned ... back” the funds, the vice president added. “He now wants it back, but he turned it back.”

Gov. John Kasich, R-Ohio, also “turned it back.”

But Gov. Jerry Brown, D-Calif.?

“He took it all,” **Biden** said, prompting laughter from his audience.

“And guess what?” the vice president added during his speech at an event hosted by the Washington Post. “Watch what’s going to happen in the next four years you’re going to see a high-speed rail system going directly from [Los Angeles] to Las Vegas, carrying hundreds of thousands of passengers.”

The future of the high-speed rail project linking Vegas to L.A. remains in doubt.

Biden Closes His Amtrak Hours

By Micah Reynolds

[North Fork \(NY\) Vue](#), October 22, 2014

During a speech on commuter issues, Vice President **Biden** estimates that he has made roughly 8,000 round-trips on Amtrak.

“**Biden** closes his Amtrak hours” is categorized as “us”.

Vice President Touts New Detroit Buses, M-1

By David Shepardson

[Detroit News](#), October 21, 2014

Washington — Vice President Joe **Biden** touted Detroit’s M-1 rail system and the Transportation Department’s award of funds for 50 new buses for the Motor City.

“Detroit’s getting off its back. It’s on its knees. It’s about to stand up,” **Biden** said at a forum on commuting sponsored by the Washington Post at a local theater. He praised Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan as a “great mayor. ... I’m serious — a really can-do guy.”

Biden also suggested self-driving cars may be in place faster than many experts have predicted.

Last month, the U.S. Transportation Department announced it was awarding the city \$25.9 million to buy as many as 50 new hybrid and clean diesel buses that will ease overcrowding, reduce wait times, and provide more accessible and reliable service where 35 percent of the people live below the poverty line. They will replace aging vehicles that have been “plagued by maintenance issues, resulting in better on-time service, as well as reduced carbon emissions,” the department said.

It marked the second boost from Washington in less than a year for the city’s beleaguered bus system. In December, the Federal Transit Administration approved \$41.6 million to overhaul 60 buses, improve facilities and acquire security equipment.

The Transportation Department said 60 percent of Detroiters don’t have access to a car. “They rely on buses,” **Biden** said. “They don’t have enough buses so we just arranged for” funding for more buses.

“What does mean? It means people can keep the few jobs they have out there. They don’t show up late. They are actually able to be on time. ... It means a working mom doesn’t have to take two buses that take two hours to get to work.”

He also praised the M-1 rail system “going right through the center of town.”

“The point is that it matters. Transportation and convenient transportation, efficient transportation matter to how people can live their lives,” **Biden** said.

Biden also praised Google Inc. for working on self-driving cars and Tesla Motors Inc. for building electric vehicles.

“Tesla — I shouldn’t say Tesla because I’m going to be accused of promoting a brand. But here’s the deal: They are about to put a car on the market that goes 0 to 60 in 3.2 seconds,” **Biden** said referring a new souped-up version of the Model S that the automaker unveiled earlier this month.

“Google’s working to develop self-driving cars, which I predict will be around in the next four or five years. The possibilities are immense.”

Self-driving cars could save lives and improve productivity, **Biden** said. “It’s gigantic,” he said.

Duggan won permission in January from Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr to hire a new bus director, after he saw buses running behind schedule while residents waited in subzero temperatures. Duggan had been pushing the Obama administration for bus funding and spoke with **Biden** about it.

Also last month, the Transportation Department awarded a \$12.2 million federal grant to help finish the 3.31-mile M-1 streetcar project.

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Vice President Joe Biden Visit Tied To Int’l Recognition Of The “The Duluth Model”

By Kevin Jacobsen

[KBJR-TV Duluth \(MN\)](#), October 22, 2014

Duluth, MN (NNCNOW.com) – Vice President Joe **Biden** is expected to personally congratulate Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, or DAIP, on its recent international recognition of “The Duluth Model” during his visit to Duluth on Thursday.

Just last week, the World Future Council named “The Duluth Model” as the world’s best policy, honoring it with the 2014 gold Future Policy Award during an event in Geneva, Switzerland.

“The Duluth Model” is a groundbreaking domestic violence policy created in the early 1980s by the late Ellen Pence.

October is also Domestic Violence Awareness month.

The Vice President will also head to Hibbing on Thursday where he will be lending political support to Representative Rick Nolan, who is seeking reelection to the 8th Congressional District.

Written by Kevin Jacobsen

VP Joe Biden To Campaign For Schneider In Illinois

[Associated Press](#), October 22, 2014

VERNON HILLS, Ill. (AP) – Vice President Joe **Biden** is expected to attend a rally in support of Democratic U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider.

Schneider is in a race with Republican Bob Dold in Illinois’ 10th congressional district. Schneider’s campaign says the vice president will headline an early voter rally on Wednesday afternoon at a community center in the suburb of Vernon Hills.

Biden is one of many political heavy weights who have visited Illinois in recent days to campaign for Democratic candidates. President Barack Obama was in Chicago on Sunday to help Gov. Pat Quinn in his campaign against GOP challenger Bruce Rauner (ROW’-nur). Quinn campaigned Tuesday with former President Bill Clinton.

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Bill Clinton Stumps For Quinn; Tells Workers To Look To Future

By Natasha Korecki

[Chicago Sun-Times](#), October 22, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton landed in Chicago on Tuesday, becoming the latest in a steady stream of star-studded pols to stump for Gov. Pat Quinn's re-election.

With U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Quinn at his side at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, Clinton defended Quinn's tenure as governor.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about: More jobs, higher incomes, better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities," Clinton told a crowd of hard-hat wearing workers at the steel pipe and tube manufacturing plant. "The rest is all background music."

Clinton worked to dispel thoughts that this election was a referendum on President Barack Obama as well as convince the crowd that a vote for Quinn was a vote for the future.

"When he took office, things were in a terrible mess . . . There were no easy answers," Clinton said of Quinn. "We had the worst crash since the Depression. . . . Don't be pessimistic about the future, and don't let your neighbors be."

Clinton's arrival came one day after Obama's departure. While here, Obama headed a 6,200-person rally at Chicago State University, then pushed for early voting on Monday. Vice President Joe **Biden** is on deck for Wednesday. First lady Michelle Obama as well as Hillary Clinton also have come through town for Quinn.

Republican Bruce Rauner, meanwhile, was pushing early voting in Henry, Tazewell and Winnebago counties. Rauner also tapped starpower as well: New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who appeared with Rauner at a campaign stop in Rockford.

Christie, also the chair of the Republican Governors Association, has visited Illinois numerous times to campaign for Rauner and on Tuesday was grabbing headlines complaining about the Democrats' use of the minimum wage as a campaign tactic.

Meanwhile, Rauner's campaign has a different take on the state's record of job creation.

"When it comes to jobs, Illinois continues to lag behind its neighbors with one of the lowest growth rates in the Midwest," Rauner spokesman Mike Schrimpf said in an emailed statement.

But new numbers released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show Illinois had the second best job growth in the nation. Last month, Illinois added nearly 20,000 jobs.

"Illinois has seen the nation's sharpest decline in unemployment over the last year, and our unemployment rate is at its lowest point in more than six years," Quinn's statement said.

Rauner and Quinn are locked in a tight election battle for the governor's mansion. The election is Nov. 4.

Vernon Hills Preparing For Vice President Joe Biden's Visit Wednesday

By Russell Lissau

[Chicago Daily Herald](#), October 21, 2014

The Vernon Hills Park District facility will be closed for the day and scheduled programs have been canceled. Additionally, motorists should expect corresponding delays and detours in the area.

As campaign workers, district staffers and others prepare for the event, the Sullivan Center has been a flurry of activity. U.S. flags and other decorations are being added to the decor, a stage is being built and barricades will be erected.

Park district Executive Director Jeff Fougerousse sounded excited about **Biden's** visit.

"When you can bring the vice president of the United States into our park district facility, that's a special moment for us," he said.

Doors will open to the public at 1 p.m., and things are expected to get underway about 1:30 p.m.

The Sullivan Center was chosen for **Biden's** visit because it's in the 10th Congressional District, where Democratic incumbent Brad Schneider is running a close race with Republican rival Robert Dold.

Schneider's campaign committee is covering the \$500 rental cost, said Jay Bullman, the center's facility supervisor. The contract was signed Oct. 14, Fougrousse said, and planning began in earnest a few days later.

Biden and Schneider will be joined by U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, who's also seeking re-election, and by Paul Vallas, who's running for lieutenant governor with Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn as his running mate.

Durbin's challenger is Republican Jim Oberweis. Quinn is running against the GOP's Bruce Rauner.

At the Sullivan Center, a preschool program, some dance classes, and a rhythmic gymnastics class previously set for Wednesday have been canceled. An after-school program will be relocated, too.

The dozen or so full-time employees who otherwise would be scheduled to work at the center won't have vacation days, Fougrousse said.

"They're still going to work, just at different locations," he said. "It's not a paid holiday for staff."

Biden's visit isn't causing any other significant disruptions in town, officials said.

Vernon Hills police are involved with traffic control coordination. The Secret Service will handle **Biden's** transportation, officials said.

Motorists should expect delays or detours in the area, police said.

Village employees aren't involved in any other aspects of the rally.

"It's a private event," Village Manager John Kalmar said.

When President Obama made a speech at Evanston's Northwestern University this month, university and city officials had much more to do.

"It's a much more overwhelming event when the sitting president comes to your campus," Northwestern spokesman Al Cubbage said.

University leaders had about 10 days to prepare. Cubbage and key staffers met daily to discuss security, facilities issues and other matters.

For example, three rows of seats in the rear of the Cahn Auditorium needed to be removed so risers could be installed for media crews. A temporary floor was built over the theater's orchestra pit, too.

"It was a lot of work," Cubbage said.

The Sullivan center has hosted political bigwigs before. In March 2012, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney had a rally there.

Bill Clinton Campaigns With Quinn On Southwest Side

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 20, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton made his pitch for Gov. Pat Quinn to several hundred hardhat-wearing workers Tuesday, saying the Democratic governor inherited an economic mess and has worked hard to grow jobs.

Clinton campaigned with Quinn at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, while Republican challenger Bruce Rauner plans an afternoon early voting rally with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in Rockford. The two major Illinois governor candidates are kicking off the final, frenzied two weeks of campaigning before the Nov. 4 election with the help of some political star power this week.

Clinton said people should ignore the attack ads in the race with Republican challenger Bruce Rauner and instead focus on which candidate will be best for their future, noting that outside Illinois the election is being billed by Republicans as a referendum against President Barack Obama.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about," Clinton said. "We need more jobs, higher incomes. Better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities."

"I am telling you, Pat Quinn deserves to be re-elected governor of Illinois," Clinton said. "When he took office things were in a terrible mess, and the governor can't print money, unlike Washington. And there were no easy answers."

Clinton alluded to the vast amounts of money being spent on the governor's race and referenced Quinn's difficult political position of running for re-election while promising to make a temporary income-tax increase permanent.

"It's election season, people are trying to sell you something. It's been my experience, and you think about this, when somebody's trying to make a sale and they want me to stop thinking, they probably don't have my best interest at heart," Clinton said. "If they trust me to disagree with them, even if I do, I might buy whatever it is they're selling because they trusted me, because I don't think they're trying to pull a scam. That's basically what the politics of this election is about."

"When you reach a certain age, you are a lot more concerned about younger people. About the future," Clinton said, mentioning his new granddaughter. "And I am here to support (U.S. Sen.) Dick Durbin and Pat Quinn because they are about the future."

Clinton's visit come on the heels of President Barack Obama's return to Chicago to stump for Quinn. He headlined a rally Sunday at Chicago State University to mark the start of early voting, then cast his ballot Monday. First lady Michelle Obama and former Secretary of State and possible presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton helped raise money for Quinn earlier this month.

Christie, meanwhile, has been a frequent sight on the campaign trail with Rauner, hosting several fundraisers and shaking hands at restaurants across the state.

The parade of political celebrities visiting Illinois demonstrates what's at stake: Republicans see a way in after years of Democratic control, while Democrats are going all-out to prevent the potential embarrassment of losing the governor's mansion in Obama's home state.

On Wednesday, Vice President Joe **Biden** is scheduled to appear at an early voting rally with Quinn running mate Paul Vallas, Durbin and U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider at the Sullivan Community Center in Vernon Hills. Durbin faces Republican state Sen. Jim Oberweis, and Schneider has a rematch against former Republican U.S. Rep. Robert Dold.

Quinn and Rauner hit the campaign trail following the final televised debate Monday night in which the two unleashed negativity on each other for most of an hour. Quinn decried "savage cuts" in a Rauner budget, while the Republican challenger repeatedly branded the Democratic chief executive a "phony" and a "failure."

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Biden: LaGuardia Staff Thanked Me for Telling Truth About Airport

[NBC News](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** says workers at LaGuardia Airport thanked him for comments he made earlier this year where he compared the structure to a "third world country."

Biden Screws Up De Blasio's Vision Zero Plan

[New York Post](#), October 22, 2014

Joe **Biden** should get his Vision checked.

The gaffe-prone vice president reversed the words of Mayor de Blasio's signature "Vision Zero" traffic-safety plan, before catching the mistake and correcting himself during a press conference at Vaughn College in Queens on Monday about improving the region's airports.

Biden was mentioning a \$130 million federal grant to projects such as the proposed Moynihan train station in Manhattan when he veered off to praise "the mayor's zero vision, uh, Vision Zero plan to limit traffic accidents."

Biden has a reputation for putting his foot in his mouth.

During a visit to Philadelphia in February, he compared La Guardia Airport to airfields in Third World countries.

"If I blindfolded you and took you to La Guardia Airport in New York, you must think, 'I must be in some Third World country.' I'm not joking," he said back then.

On Monday, **Biden** quipped in Queens that his next landing at the airport was fretful.

"After I made that comment, about three weeks later, Air Force Two was landing at La Guardia and so my pilots all said, 'Oh, Lord, here we go. Do we need to put any Marines on board?'" **Biden** recalled.

Gov. Cuomo, who joined **Biden** at the event, couldn't resist returning to **Biden's** comment, asking audience members in his Power Point presentation to identify who uttered the La Guardia quip from a list that included Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Jay Leno and Donald Trump.

"The answer is D, none of the above," said Cuomo, adding that the culprit was **Biden**. "And he was right," Cuomo said.

During the event, Cuomo unveiled a plan to redesign both La Guardia and Kennedy airports, with new restaurants and shops in the terminals, more hotels, and access via high-speed ferries and improved rail service.

We're Depending On Cuomo To Fix JFK, LaGuardia

[Newsday](#), October 22, 2014

With Vice President Joseph **Biden** at his side, Gov. Andrew Cuomo launched a welcome competition this week for ideas to help veer LaGuardia Airport back into the first world – and to help stabilize Kennedy Airport within that realm.

You don't have to be a frequent flier to understand the problems. Evening travelers waiting to depart LaGuardia's central terminal have been known to quietly sip coffee while watching a lively local mouse population frolic.

Arriving fliers headed for Manhattan by cab can test their stamina by pushing forward heavy luggage – and as often as not tiny, sleep-deprived, howling children – while the minutes creep by as they wait for a taxi to roll up.

Cuomo admirably volunteered to tackle these problems last January, even though the Port Authority owns the airports. But now he owns this project.

The vice president's presence at Cuomo's side Monday was an especially deft touch. **Biden** is the one who spoke for most of us not long ago when he blurted out that LGA is "Third World."

JFK isn't quite so hellish, but it's a strong runner-up. The airport is officially 15 miles from midtown. But these are New York City miles, not normal miles. So the trip from the luggage carousel to your hotel room can chew up hours that feel like days.

The AirTrain from JFK to the Long Island Rail Road or to the subway lines in Queens helps – provided you're not packing like a sultan.

Still, New York is tough place to get into and out of. So now, with an election looming, Cuomo says the design competition will begin in a month. We hope he means business when he says he wants local airports that are more attractive and more efficient.

So what would we like to see now at LGA and JFK?

Better access. Start with high-speed water taxis from Manhattan to LGA and JFK. And add subway service – maybe via the N train – from midtown to LaGuardia.

And for the folks running LGA: Build a better mousetrap. Please. Mice at the departure gate just won't do it.

Biden Plays Stand-Up, And The Joke's On Him

By Alex Thompson

[New York Times](#), October 21, 2014

The comedian Jay Leno was honored with the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for American Humor this week, but it was Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr. who beat the comics to the punchline with his own self-mocking monologue.

"No one ever doubts I mean what I say. The problem is, I sometimes say all that I mean," said the gaffe-prone Mr. **Biden**, speaking before an audience of comics and V.I.P.'s at the vice presidential residence. America is great, Mr. **Biden** continued, because "we're self-assured enough to laugh at ourselves."

"Matter of fact," he added. "I'm so damn self-assured I don't stop laughing."

The audience included Mr. Leno, Seth Myers, Wanda Sykes and Robert Klein.

Mr. Myers — who relies on the vice president's blunders on NBC's "Late Night" — drew laughs when he said Mr. **Biden** had an open invitation to visit his New York apartment "because technically he helped pay for it."

Where There's Trouble, You'll Usually Find Joe Biden

By Lloyd Green

[The Daily Beast](#), October 21, 2014

His crisis-creating remarks and his son's drug-related discharge from the Navy are just the beginning. This guy's a train wreck.

According to the polls, Joe **Biden** doesn't have a prayer in 2016. And according to former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, **Biden** "has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades."

But two things are also certain: First, **Biden** is still Barack Obama's go-to-guy when partisan loyalty is at a premium. Faced with rising concern and criticism over the outbreak of Ebola, Obama tapped Ron Klain, **Biden**'s former chief of staff, to be America's Ebola czar. Second, **Biden**'s friends and family have not hesitated to profit from their ties to the vice president. **Biden**'s brother, James, and his son, Hunter, have cashed in on the family name, whether it be in Iraq or Ukraine. **Biden** may have the mien of the crazy uncle in the basement, but he is also a real reminder of what is wrong with politics.

Let's start with Klain. Like **Biden**, Klain is a consummate fixer, with Georgetown and Harvard Law School degrees thrown in for good measure. But for his political pedigree, Klain would have no business being Ebola coordinator. Ebola is not just another messaging problem.

Klain was the aide to Al Gore who was memorialized by Kevin Spacey in the HBO movie *Recount* as pushing for a more aggressive approach to, well, the 2000 Florida recount. Then, after failing in Florida, Klain became a Fannie Mae lobbyist who helped convince Congress and Fannie Mae's regulators that all was well with the world, even as Fannie Mae was inflating what would prove to be a catastrophic housing bubble.

And yet, **Biden** and Obama now seek to again unleash Klain on America. To be sure, Klain's public-health credentials are invisible, a fact that Obama himself has tacitly acknowledged. In announcing Klain's selection, Obama framed things this way: "Klain comes to the job with extensive experience in overseeing complex governmental operations and has good working relationships with leading members of Congress as well as senior administration officials." Not one word about Klain, medicine, and immunology.

In that sense, Klain is all too reminiscent of Harriet Miers, George W. Bush's White House counsel and his personal lawyer. Bush nominated Miers to the Supreme Court but was then compelled to pull her nomination after it became clear that Miers' loyalty to the president far exceeded her legal chops.

What prevented Miers from joining the court was the fact that she would have to run the gantlet of Senate confirmation, which is something that Klain, the Ebola czar, will not need to do. He is a creature of the White House, cloaked in executive privilege.

Ron Klain is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae.

Klain is not the first to crawl out of the swamp of **Biden** World on to the larger stage. He is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae; had his own ties to **Biden**; and worked in a job in which he was over his head. For the record, Donilon's brother, Mike, was **Biden**'s counselor between 2009 and 2013.

According to *The Nation*, "Fannie Mae paid Donilon, a longtime Democratic Party operative, \$15 million to lobby Congress to gut the power of government regulators." He was "a top executive at Fannie Mae during the period when cooking the books to increase executive compensation would later lead to a \$400 million fine."

More disturbingly, Donilon took center stage as national security adviser despite the fact that he was lightly regarded in national-security circles. In Bob Woodward's telling, Gen. Jim Jones, Donilon's predecessor at NSA, said to Donilon, "You have no credibility with the military.... you frequently pop off with absolute declarations about places you've never been, leaders you've never met, or colleagues you work with." Donilon was also Obama's guy while the president was laying out imaginary red lines to Syria.

But it's not just **Biden** placing loyalty over competence that makes him who he is, his tropism toward plagiarism, or even his tendency to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. It's **Biden**'s willingness to turn a blind eye in the face of his family members trading on **Biden**'s job as vice president for fun, profit, and disgrace that completes the picture.

Take Hunter **Biden**, the veep's younger son. Just last week, it was reported that the 44-year-old Hunter was discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine. But here's the thing. To get into the Navy, Hunter needed a separate waiver on account of his prior drug use. History does repeat itself.

And then there's that matter of Hunter and Ukraine. Back in May, Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private natural-gas producer, announced that Hunter had joined its board. To which the White House could only reply, "Hunter **Biden** and other members of the **Biden** family are obviously private

citizens, and where they work does not reflect an endorsement by the administration or by the vice president or president.”

And then there's James **Biden**, the vice president's brother, who made a go at winning public-housing contracts in Iraq. As reported in the waning days of the 2012 presidential campaign, after Joe became vice president, James joined New Jersey-based Hill International as its executive vice president.

So what? So this. Hill's business is managing construction projects in the Middle East and the United States, and lo and behold, six months after James joined Hill in 2010, the company won a \$1.5 billion contract to build at least 100,000 affordable homes in Iraq. Talk about coincidence.

Or not. According to published reports, the State Department, then run by Hillary Clinton, and the Iraqi government were instrumental in Hill winning the contract. Also at the time, **Biden** was Obama's point person on Iraq, and like Klain, who is no expert on public health, James **Biden** was no maven on public housing.

The White House may have contemplated dumping Joe **Biden** from the ticket. But that was then. These days, it is **Biden** who again finds himself at the center of all things Obama.

Even as the United States struggles to build a coalition against ISIS, it is **Biden** who tweaks Turkey, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, without appreciating the havoc that he would wreak, tweaks for which he would ultimately be forced to apologize. We have seen the diplomatic crises **Biden** can stir up. But sadly, it's hardly the worst of **Biden**'s handiwork.

Lloyd Green was the opposition research counsel to the George H.W. Bush campaign in 1988, and served in the Department of Justice between 1990 and 1992.

'White Boy' Biden Got It Right And Wrong About The Tea Party

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson

[Huffington Post](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** got the tongues furiously wagging again after a recent meeting with black ministers in South Carolina. First he called himself the virtually lone “white boy” in a black Wilmington, Delaware neighborhood. Then he lambasted the tea party as “crazy.” The reference to himself as the “white boy” was more amusing than anything else. Since **Biden** obviously took great relish in making the point to a mostly black gathering that he's one of them too and by extension so is the Democratic Party.

But it was his typecast of the tea party as a bunch of loons that was far more eye catching. He got it right and wrong about it. It's easy to sneer at, and even poke fun, at a party that, since it burst on the scene in the aftermath of President Obama's first presidential election win, some of its members have come off as a cross between a KKK Klavern and a PT Barnum clown circus act. After their first flush of growth, the party's slide in getting candidates elected and gaining more popular support has been relentlessly downhill. Polls repeatedly show that a majority of Americans look on the tea party with everything from disgust to indifference. Gallup poll numbers show that less than one in four Americans now back the party. But looks can be deceiving, and that's never truer than in politics, and this is where **Biden** got it wrong about the tea party.

The best guess is that of the two hundred plus House Republicans, less than half of them are there because of tea party support or are directly affiliated with the tea party. Yet this minority within the GOP controlled House has continually held the House and Congress hostage on everything from spending on all domestic programs to its dozens of obstructionist and showboat votes repealing the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, the Senate is regarded as the one sure firewall between the tea party-influenced, GOP-controlled House getting its way on legislation and its initiatives.

GOP Senate leaders have been careful to keep the tea party at arm's length and the various official GOP campaign committees have loudly made it clear that in the 2014 and the 2016 elections they will only bankroll GOP candidates who are electable. This means candidates who are sans the tea party stigma and odor. They have been as good as their word and now crow that the current crop of GOP contenders in the key Senate races have a better than fair shot at winning precisely because they are seen as sensible and electable.

This is much less it than it appears. The supposedly moderate GOP Senators have toed the tea party line in opposing tougher gun control provisions and immigration reform. And they have hammered away on spending cuts on everything from Head Start to food nutrition programs, and have torpedoed key Obama administration judicial and staff appointments.

At every step, they have cast a wary but congenial eye on the tea party. There's no mystery why. The 2014 midterm elections shape up to be a cliffhanger in the key battleground states between the GOP and Democrats, especially incumbent Democratic senators. The incessant media talk of a GOP tsunami in those states is just that – talk. The Democrats are rolling the dice hard in the key match-ups in those states and are spending the bank on their candidates. That makes the tea party even more vital to the GOP, shrunken numbers are not. It can make enough noise and in some districts turn out sufficient numbers to make a difference in close contests. That's even more vital in swing districts with Democratic congresspersons who are on shaky ground with conservative voters.

The various polls that show the declining tea party fortunes have also noted that the tea party's backer's vehemence toward the Democratic Party is unrelenting. This presents yet another dilemma and opportunity for the GOP. With nowhere else for tea party adherents to go other than the GOP, this could open the gates wide again for more challenges from tea party backed candidates to GOP incumbents in 2014 and beyond. This perpetually puts GOP congresspersons in the disastrous position of having to continually look over their shoulders to see if there is a tea party candidate waiting in the wings to challenge if they do not tow the tea party line. They have turned this to their advantage by simply co-opting much of the tea party line on the issues without calling it that.

"White boy" **Biden** did not misspeak or engage in campaign ballyhoo to please black Democrats in South Carolina or anywhere else for that matter when he round-housed the tea party. The tea party's anti-Obama antics have brought them richly deserved public ridicule. But beyond the ridicule they're still very much a force to be reckoned with and the hostage taking success they've had and continue to have with the GOP is ample proof of that.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He is a frequent MSNBC contributor. He is an associate editor of New America Media. He is a weekly co-host of the Al Sharpton Show on American Urban Radio Network. He is the host of the weekly Hutchinson Report on KTYM 1460 AM Radio Los Angeles and KPFK-Radio and the Pacifica Network.

Backlash Against Leon Panetta, Robert Gates Over Memoirs

By Tim Starks

[Roll Call](#), October 22, 2014

President Obama's former Defense secretaries are coming under fire in light of their memoirs that criticize the commander-in-chief while he's still in office.

Retiring Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. said he doesn't plan to issue a critical tell-all memoir mid-presidency the way Leon E. Panetta did recently.

"I think what Leon said in the book is unfortunate. Frankly, I don't think it's something that a former Cabinet member should do while the president he served is still in office. That's not something that I would even consider doing," he told CNN in an interview that aired late Monday.

Holder isn't the only administration official to have scolded Panetta, but Vice President Joseph R. **Biden**, Jr.'s (@joebiden) declaration of his memoir as "inappropriate" was overshadowed by remarks he made that same day which preceded an apology to Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Arthur Cyr, a professor at Carthage College and senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, on Tuesday extended the criticism to Robert M. Gates, as well.

Gates' memoirs are especially significant. His career unfolded at the CIA, where he became the first director to rise through the ranks. His tenure as defense secretary spanned the two administrations of Barack Obama and George W. Bush, unprecedented bipartisan service. Gates became regarded as a dedicated public servant. His score-settling in print therefore was surprising.

...Gates' memoirs have helped the Republicans in partisan political terms. Likewise, Panetta's criticism of others, in particular President Obama, no doubt will assist the opposition. This is even more ironic, given his career as a Democratic Party spokesman and member of Congress.

Obama's Day: Cabinet Members

By David Jackson

[USA Today](#), October 21, 2014

President Obama plans to spend Tuesday in meetings with Cabinet members from the Treasury and Pentagon.

In the late morning, Obama will discuss the U.S. economy with Treasury Secretary Jack Lew.

The late afternoon brings a presidential meeting with Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. One of the topics is likely to be the battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

In addition, Obama has his weekly lunch with Vice President **Biden**.

The president is also expected to receive updates from aides on efforts to contain the Ebola virus.

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Now Driving The Straight Talk Express: Senator Carper Of Delaware

By Senator Carper of Delaware Kathleen Hunter

[Bloomberg](#), October 21, 2014

It's not common, particularly in campaign season, to hear straight talk from Washington politicians. But Senator Tom Carper, a Democrat, said what he meant – and meant what he said – in response to questions posed during a Bloomberg News event today in New York. Ebola

Asked about flaws in the U.S. response, he criticized his colleagues in Congress for using political "scare tactics."

"Some of my colleagues have been shameful in the way, frankly, they've manipulated this for purposes that I think we can all understand," he said. "The way people have just been playing the scare tactics is just, I think, shameful." 'Boots on the Ground'

Asked if President Barack Obama was being disingenuous in promising not to put "boots on the ground" to combat IS, he agreed: the President may have gone too far.

"If you go back in time, you'll find that presidents in the past have not always been fulling forthcoming: Not just this president, but other presidents," he said. Carper cited George W. Bush, who he said was not completely honest with the American public for reasons that "are unexplainable and unforgivable."

“So this may be an indiscretion – it is minor compared to what his immediate predecessor engaged in,” Carper said. Hunter **Biden**

Asked if getting discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine was an appropriate punishment for Vice President Joe **Biden**’s son Hunter, Carper – a close friend of the Bidens and a former Navy reservist – did not try to play both sides.

“We have pretty bright lines in terms of what was acceptable and what was unacceptable,” Carper said, growing visibly emotional. “And I think he was treated pretty much like anybody else would have been treated.”

The Hunter Biden Chronicles

By Michelle Malkin

[National Review](#), October 22, 2014

Everything you need to know about Beltway nepotism, corporate cronyism, and corruption can be found in the biography of Robert Hunter **Biden**. Where are the Occupy Wall Street rabble-rousers and enemies of elitist privilege when you need them? Straining their neck muscles to look the other way.

The youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden** made news last week after the Wall Street Journal revealed he had been booted from the Navy Reserve for cocaine use. His drug abuse was certainly no surprise to the Navy, which issued him a waiver for a previous drug offense before commissioning him as a public-affairs officer at the age of 43. The Navy also bent over backward a second time with an age waiver so he could secure the cushy part-time job.

Advertisement Papa **Biden** loves to tout his middle-class, “Average Joe” credentials. But rest assured, if his son had been Hunter Smith or Hunter Jones or Hunter Brown, the Navy’s extraordinary dispensations would be all but unattainable. Oh, and if he had been Hunter Palin, the New York Times would be on its 50th front-page investigative report by now.

Despite the disgraceful ejection from our military, Hunter’s Connecticut law license won’t be subject to automatic review. Because, well, **Biden**.

Biden’s bennies are not just one-offs. Skating by, flouting rules, and extracting favors are the story of Hunter’s life.

Hunter’s first job, acquired after Joe **Biden** won his 1996 Senate reelection bid in Delaware, was with MBNA. That’s the credit-card conglomerate and top campaign donor that forked over nearly \$63,000 in bundled primary and general contributions from its employees to Senator **Biden**. As I’ve reported previously, Daddy **Biden** secured his custom-built, multimillion-dollar house in Delaware’s ritziest Chateau Country neighborhood with the help of a leading MBNA corporate executive. Average Joe went on to carry legislative water for MBNA in the Senate for years.

Hunter zoomed up to senior vice president by early 1998 and then scored a plum position in the Clinton administration’s Commerce Department, specializing in “electronic commerce,” before returning to MBNA three years later as a high-priced “consultant.” While he collected those “consulting” (translation: nepotistic access-trading) fees, Hunter became a “founding partner” in the lobbying firm of Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair in 2002.

William Oldaker was Papa **Biden**’s former fundraiser, campaign treasurer, and general counsel — a Beltway barnacle whose Democratic-machine days dated back to Teddy Kennedy’s 1980 presidential bid. Under Oldaker’s tutelage, Hunter lobbied for drug companies, universities, and other deep-pocketed clients to the tune of nearly \$4 million billed to the company by 2007.

Coincidentally, then-Illinois senator Barack Obama personally requested and secured cozy taxpayer-subsidized earmarks for several of Hunter’s clients.

Hunter got himself appointed to multiple corporate board positions, including a directorship with Eudora Global. It's an investment firm founded by one Jeffrey Cooper, head of one of the biggest asbestos-litigation firms in the country. SimmonsCooper, based in Madison County, Ill., donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to **Biden** the Elder's various political campaigns over the past decade — all while the firm poured \$6.5 million into lobbying against a key tort-reform bill, which **Biden** worked hard to defeat. Cooper also contributed to the Delaware attorney-general campaign of Hunter's older brother, Beau, and paid Beau for legal work on lucrative asbestos-litigation cases.

Hunter also was previously a top official at Paradigm Global Advisors, a hedge-fund holding company founded with Vice President **Biden**'s brother, James, and marketed by convicted finance fraudster Allen Stanford. As Paradigm chairman, Hunter oversaw half a billion dollars of client money invested in hedge funds while remaining a lobbyist at Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair. Cooper chipped in \$2 million for the ill-fated venture, which went bust amid nasty fraud lawsuits.

Continually failing upward, Hunter snagged a seat on the board of directors of taxpayer-subsidized, stimulus-inflated Amtrak, where he pretended not to be a lobbyist, but rather an "effective advocate" for the government railroad system serving the 1 percenters' D.C.–New York City corridor.

So where does a coke-abusing influence peddler go after raking in gobs of Daddy-enabled dough and abusing the U.S. Navy's ill-considered generosity? Back to Cronyland! Hunter joined Ukrainian natural-gas company Burisma Holdings — owned by a powerful Russian government sympathizer who fled to Russia in February — this spring. The hypocritical lobbyist-bashers at the White House deny he will be lobbying and deny any conflict of interest.

Meanwhile, Just Like You Joe was whipping up class envy in South Carolina last week. "Corporate profits have soared," he railed, thanks to "these guys running hedge funds in New York," who are to blame for "income inequality." You know, like his son and brother and their Beltway back-scratching patrons.

The Bidens: They're not like us.

— Michelle Malkin is the author of Culture of Corruption: Obama and His Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies. Her e-mail address is . © 2014 Creators.com

Women In The World Texas Brings Big Names To San Antonio

[KSAT-TV San Antonio](#), October 21, 2014

SAN ANTONIO – The Women in the World Texas conference comes to San Antonio Wednesday, and will showcase an array of social, cultural and humanitarian leaders from around the world.

Top names in attendance include Gloria Steinem, Eva Longoria, Dolores Huerta, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Dr. Jill **Biden** and Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe.

Panels will be held to discuss politics, feminism, and other issues affecting women.

KSAT will be at the conference and will have live updates on Twitter (@KSATnews) and on Facebook throughout the day.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Alison Lundergan Grimes, Kay Hagan And Other Candidates Avoid Obama

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

After a few days of trying to ignore the question, Michelle Nunn, the Democratic candidate for the United States Senate in Georgia, acknowledged on Friday that she had voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. By this year's standards, that's pretty forthright, especially compared with Alison Lundergan Grimes, the Democrat running for the Senate in Kentucky, who refuses to discuss her presidential vote.

Only one Democratic Senate candidate this cycle has been willing to appear with the president on the stump: Gary Peters in Michigan. The others have spent months keeping their distance from Mr. Obama and some of his best policies. Even Ms. Nunn just started running a television ad complaining that an attack ad by her Republican opponent, David Perdue, featured a misleading photo of her and Mr. Obama. The photo was actually taken at an event honoring President George H.W. Bush, she said.

The panicky Democratic flight away from President Obama — and from some of the party's most important positions — is not a surprise. Mr. Obama remains highly unpopular among white voters, particularly in Southern states where candidates like Ms. Nunn, Ms. Grimes and several others are struggling to establish leads. But one of the reasons for his unpopularity is that nervous members of his own party have done a poor job of defending his policies over the nearly six years of his presidency, allowing a Republican narrative of failure to take hold.

Few voters know that the 2009 stimulus bill contributed heavily to the nation's economic recovery, saving and creating 2.5 million jobs. Not a word of it is spoken on the campaign trail, where little credit is also given to the White House for months of promising economic news.

Similarly, the Affordable Care Act, one of the most far-reaching and beneficial laws to have been passed by Congress in years, gets little respect even among the Democratic candidates who voted for it. Though none support the Republican position of repeal, most talk about the need to "fix" the health law, as if it were a wreck alongside the road rather than a vehicle providing millions of people with health coverage.

"When I think about the health care law, frustrated, disappointed, you can put a lot of words toward it, but every day I work to try to fix it," said Senator Mark Begich of Alaska, in a radio ad. (Mr. Begich voted for the law.) In a recent debate, Senator Kay Hagan, a Democrat of North Carolina, talked mostly about the "common-sense fixes" she wants to make to the law.

Several Democratic candidates, including Ms. Hagan, Ms. Nunn, and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, quickly adopted the right-wing talking point that President Obama needs to impose a travel ban on all residents of African countries with Ebola cases, even though most public-health experts say such a ban would be ineffective and could make the situation worse.

Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, who has fought loudly against the president's energy policies, has scurried so far to the right that she even opposes legalizing marijuana for medical purposes, though her leading Republican opponent supports it.

Many of these candidates are running in difficult political environments and are being careful about what they say or don't say in hopes of preserving Democratic control of the Senate. They run the risk, though, of alienating important constituencies who prefer a party with a spine, especially black voters, who remain very supportive of Mr. Obama. By not standing firmly for their own policies, Democrats send a message to voters that the unending Republican criticism of the president is legitimate. There is much that is going right in this country, and there is still time for Democrats to say so.

HBO And CBS Move Toward Selling Content Directly To Consumers

By Editorial Board, New York Times

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Executives at media and cable companies have been resisting the idea of selling TV channels à la carte for years, saying it was not financially feasible. But that resistance is starting to give way to a more pragmatic approach that should benefit consumers.

Last week, officials at HBO said they would start selling an Internet-only subscription to the network's movies and shows next year. Also last week, CBS started selling all its programming online for \$5.99 a month. And companies like Dish Network and Verizon are planning to sell Web-based TV subscriptions.

The cable bundle — that overflowing buffet of hundreds of TV channels that can cost \$80 a month or more — has understandably frustrated consumers. Many Americans would prefer to pay less for their favorite channels. But cable companies like Comcast and Time Warner and media conglomerates like Viacom and Disney have had a huge financial incentive to push consumers to buy ever larger bundles for higher prices. These companies have also successfully lobbied against bills introduced by lawmakers like Senator John McCain that would encourage cable companies to sell channels à la carte.

But the success of streaming video companies like Netflix and Hulu and the fear that many younger Americans may never subscribe to cable or satellite TV have forced media and telecommunications executives to rethink their positions. Companies like HBO and CBS are betting that they can reach more subscribers by cutting out the middleman and selling directly to consumers.

That could, indeed, help some Americans save money. For example, people who only want to watch "Game of Thrones" and "Girls" might be able to buy an online HBO subscription for, say, \$20 a month, not the \$70 they would have to pay Comcast for a cable subscription that includes HBO and dozens of channels they do not want. (Consumers will, of course, have to pay separately for a high-speed Internet connection.)

The coming wave of Internet-based TV services might also make the cable and media industries more efficient. Some niche networks that have a small but strong followings might find it more lucrative to ditch cable companies and establish a direct relationship with viewers.

Nonetheless, there will be problems. Some companies might try to make up for the revenue they lose as consumers cancel cable-TV subscriptions by raising the price of high-speed Internet service. Most American households buy broadband Internet service from a cable or phone company, and those companies could interfere with or block online video streams.

Earlier this year, Netflix complained that some of its customers had a hard time watching its movies on their Internet connections from Comcast, Verizon and other companies. Those problems were resolved when Netflix agreed to pay the broadband companies to connect its system directly to their networks.

That is why it is important that the Federal Communications Commission enact strong rules prohibiting broadband companies from blocking or interfering with Internet content. Regulators must also be careful not to allow the industry to become even less competitive as large companies like Comcast and AT&T seek to acquire smaller companies like Time Warner Cable and DirecTV.

Some Good News On The Ebola Front

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Americans who are worried about the risk of an Ebola outbreak in this country can take heart from two recent successes. In Texas, 43 people who were being monitored because they had had direct or indirect contact with Thomas Eric Duncan, a Liberian who died of Ebola in a Dallas hospital, were found clear of the Ebola virus on Monday.

Also that day, the World Health Organization declared Nigeria free of Ebola. The Nigerian health authorities were able to snuff out a small outbreak that could have spread through the crowded slums of Lagos, a city with 21 million people, and beyond.

The Nigerian success can be attributed primarily to an extraordinarily vigorous effort to track down everyone who had contact with a possibly infected person and isolating and treating anyone found to have the disease so that they would not infect anyone else. This strategy is what American health officials mean when they say Ebola can be contained through standard public health measures of tracking and isolation.

Nigeria's outbreak started on July 20 when a Liberian who was a naturalized American citizen defied medical advice, left a hospital in Monrovia, Liberia, where he was being held for observation, and flew to Lagos. He died five days later but not before infecting nine doctors and nurses who thought he had malaria.

An all-out effort to find and isolate hundreds of potential contacts in Lagos and other parts of the country held the outbreak to only 19 patients who came down with Ebola, of whom seven died. That was deemed a "spectacular success story" by the W.H.O. Another West African country, Senegal, which had a single imported case and a smaller number of contacts to trace and isolate, was declared free of Ebola on Friday.

Both countries will need to keep their guards up. As long as the epidemic rages out of control in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, there will always be a risk that infected people will leave their home countries and seek better conditions elsewhere.

In Dallas, the 43 people being monitored emerged from the 21-day incubation period for the virus without a single one becoming sick. That includes Mr. Duncan's fiancée, who cared for him when he was sick, and three other family members in the same apartment; all four stayed in the apartment for several days with contaminated towels and bedding that had not been sanitized.

It remains possible that additional health care workers — beyond the two nurses who are already infected — will come down with Ebola. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital made mistakes in dealing with the Ebola patient and the nurses who cared for him. They have now taken steps to prevent further mishaps. The danger of an outbreak affecting the public in this country is very, very slight, and the experience in Nigeria and Senegal shows that diligent responses can work.

Inequality In Hong Kong

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

The talks in Hong Kong between pro-Chinese government officials and pro-democracy student leaders are aimed mainly at easing tensions in the streets. Not on the agenda is fundamental reform of the conditions that provoked the unrest.

Chief among these conditions is China's refusal to loosen its grip on the city's political system by allowing full and open democratic elections for Hong Kong's top public office, as it had promised to do. The protesters insist that it is their right to choose who runs Hong Kong, but Beijing-backed officials have supported only cosmetic changes to the city's restrictive election law.

A related problem, as Neil Gough of The Times reported recently, is a persistent and widening wealth gap in Hong Kong. A small pro-Chinese government elite has profited greatly from the city's role in the rise of China, while incomes and opportunities for the middle and working classes have been squeezed. This elite, which controls the most lucrative sectors of Hong Kong's economy, fears that greater democracy — in the form of political participation and shared prosperity — would threaten the increasingly monopolistic crony capitalism from which they benefit.

The inequality that has helped to fuel the unrest in Hong Kong is reflected in the name the protesters took for their effort — Occupy Central, an allusion to the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in the United States three years ago that elevated the issue of inequality in America's political and economic debates.

Occupy Central, however, has a bigger challenge than its American namesake. It faces a totalitarian regime determined to deny its opponents the political means of changing their circumstances.

The problem in America is a dysfunctional political system that puts party ambitions and campaign donations above public needs. Still, elections and other established political processes, when used and protected, provide a way to identify and choose new and presumably more responsive leaders.

The worthy goal, in Hong Kong and the United States, is to link robust democracy to robust capitalism to broadly raise living standards. Like all worthy goals, it is not achievable or sustainable without struggle.

The Upside Of Lower Oil Prices

By The Editorial Board

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

The price of crude oil has fallen roughly 25 percent since a peak in June, but whether that's good news or bad depends on where you stand. It's bad for members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, and other nations and governments that rely heavily on oil exports because their income has taken a huge hit. It's especially bad for Russia and Iran, which have relied on high oil prices to defy the United States and Western sanctions. It's bad for the environment because cheaper oil means fewer incentives to develop alternative and less carbon-intensive sources of energy.

But it's not bad for Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the global oil industry. Saudi Arabia has ample cash reserves to withstand a drop in income, shows no inclination to reduce production and seems to prefer putting a squeeze on its geopolitical rivals in Iran and Russia. For the United States, it's a mixed bag. American oil production is soaring, and lower prices could slow production of shale oil, which is expensive and needs higher prices to be profitable. But lower oil prices mean reduced costs for consumers and businesses and a boost for economies across the industrialized world.

The large increase in American production is, in fact, one reason cited for the drop in prices. The other is a continuing slump in demand in Europe and other developed regions and slower growth in China. Characteristically, Russia has sniffed an American-led plot, with articles in the government press recalling how a sudden and sharp increase in Saudi production in 1985 caused prices to drop so low that the Soviet economy folded, followed by the Soviet state.

All that will make for some heated debates at the next scheduled OPEC meeting in November. But regardless of whether the oil ministers decide to reduce production and nudge prices up, the fact is that oil prices will always rise and fall in response to geopolitical crises, economic trends and natural disasters. For now, it is enough to see petro-dictators at least temporarily humbled and forced to understand that oil riches do not give them license to bend the international order to their will. And it is good for industrial and developing countries to get some juice into their economies.

But it is imperative that the United States and all other beneficiaries resist the temptation to use what could be a fleeting drop in prices to slow the search for alternative sources of energy. The planet, alas, does not have the resilience of oil prices.

Capitalism's Suffocating Music

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Onstage before thousands of fans, Sam Smith sang "Stay With Me," beseeching his partner in a one-night stand for a few minutes more, and I half wondered if the two of them needed the extra time to finish bottles of Miller Lite, because a printed plug for the beer hovered over his head.

Performing "Summertime Sadness," Lana Del Rey told a lover to "kiss me hard before you go." Would she be texting him later with a Samsung Galaxy, the smartphone for which the stage on which she appeared was visibly named?

And while I'd never thought about any car in connection with the musicians in the band Interpol, I came to picture them caroming from gig to gig in a Civic or an Accord. "Honda" floated over them as they gave their concert.

For every stage, a different sponsor. Behind every beat, a different brand.

This happened in early October. I was at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, and I was at the limits of my patience. I hadn't expected all of these corporate come-ons, so pervasive in other precincts, to be assaulting me here of all places.

"Keep Austin Weird" is the Texas capital's unofficial slogan, a clue to its proudly subversive soul. And a gathering of bare-armed, bare-legged lovers of song and smokers of pot on a gigantic field brings to mind Woodstock, not Austin Ventures, which provides financing to start-ups, and RetailMeNot, which distributes discount coupons. Those firms, too, were sponsors of stages.

Someone shoved a free sample of Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal at me on my way in. Someone else handed out free beer cozies advertising Imperial, a brew on sale at the event. Plastered all over the place were posters for "Not That Kind of Girl," the new memoir by a certain "Girls" creator. The festival had been misnamed. This was Lenapalooza.

I kept thinking of another writer, David Foster Wallace. His novel "Infinite Jest," published in 1996, imagines a tomorrow in which time itself is auctioned off to the highest bidder and the calendar becomes a billboard. There's the "Year of the Whopper," the "Year of the Whisper-Quiet Maytag Dishmaster" and even the "Year of the Tucks Medicated Pad" — a 12-month paean to posterior discomfort, 52 weeks in honor of hemorrhoids.

Is that future so far off? While recording devices have liberated many of us from commercials on television, the rest of our lives are awash in ads. They're now nestled among the trailers at movies. They flicker on the screens in taxis.

They're woven so thoroughly into sporting events, from Nascar races to basketball games, that it's hard to imagine an era when they weren't omnipresent. But in a story earlier this year on the website Consumerist, Chris Moran reported that 20 years ago, only one of the major-league baseball stadiums had a corporate moniker, Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

In contrast, 20 of the 30 stadiums now have sponsors.

It's the same with football, maybe worse. On the weekend after I got back from Austin, I went to watch the New York Jets play, and within five minutes of my arrival at MetLife Stadium, I was confronted with all sorts of sub-sponsors.

Near the Verizon gate, I spotted a V.I.P. section called the Hertz suites and saw signs that identified JetBlue as the official airline of the team, Toyota as its official vehicle and the Microsoft Surface as the official tablet of the National Football League. I resolved to check out the restrooms for an official toilet paper. (Note to Cottonelle: I did, and there's an unclaimed opportunity for you, if you can beat Charmin to the punch.)

Inside the stadium, the Verizon scoreboard was not to be confused with the Bud Light scoreboard or the Pepsi scoreboard.

When Americans talk about how crass contemporary life can seem, this advertising onslaught is part of what they're reacting to. And their growing chilliness toward corporations and sense of capitalism run amok aren't just about the salaries of chief executives and the tax dodges in play. They're about the way hucksterism invades everything, scooping up everyone.

Matthew McConaughey is at his career's summit, with a recent Oscar for "Dallas Buyers Club" and a splendid performance in "Interstellar" (to be released next month), and what's he doing with this clout? He's putting it behind the wheel of a Lincoln and peddling luxury cars the way Beyoncé has pushed Pepsi all these years.

Sellers keep finding new, willing vessels for their logos everywhere they turn. Will we someday travel from San Francisco to Northern California across the Golden Gate Bridge, for a hike in the Wells Fargo Redwood Forest?

It's a vendor's world. We're just pawns in it, even when all we want to do is hum a simple tune.

The Building Blocks Of A Good Pre-K

By Shael Polakow-Suransky And Nancy Nager

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

WITH the introduction of universal pre-K in New York City, we have created a new entry point into our public school system. This raises a key question: What do we want our children's first experiences in school to be? What does a good education look like for 4-year-olds?

This summer, Bank Street College of Education led training for 4,000 of New York's pre-K teachers, including both veterans and hundreds of people who started teaching pre-K for the first time last month. Worried teachers talked about how the pressure to achieve good outcomes on the third-grade state exams has been trickling down to early childhood classrooms in the form of work sheets, skill drills and other developmentally inappropriate methods.

The problem is real, and it is not unique to New York City. Earlier this year, Daphna Bassok and Anna Rorem, educational policy researchers at the University of Virginia, found strong evidence that current kindergarten classrooms rely too heavily on teacher-directed instruction. Their study, "Is Kindergarten the New First Grade?" revealed that the focus on narrow academic skills crowded out time for play, exploration and social interaction. In a 2009 report for the Alliance for Childhood, "Crisis in the Kindergarten," Edward Miller and Joan Almon reported that kindergarten teachers felt that prescriptive curricular demands and pressure from principals led them to prioritize academic skill-building over play.

This is a false choice. We do not need to pick between play and academic rigor.

While grown-ups recognize that pretending helps children find their way into the world, many adults think of play as separate from formal learning. The reality is quite different. As they play, children develop vital cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional skills. They make discoveries, build knowledge, experiment with literacy and math and learn to self-regulate and interact with others in socially appropriate ways. Play is also fun and interesting, which makes school a place where children look forward to spending their time. It is so deeply formative for children that it must be at the core of our early childhood curriculum.

What does purposeful play look like? When you step into an exemplary pre-K classroom, you see a room organized by a caring, responsive teacher who understands child development. Activity centers are stocked with materials that invite exploration, fire the imagination, require initiative and prompt collaboration. The room hums.

In the blocks area, two girls build a bridge, talking to each other about how to make sure it doesn't collapse and taking care not to bump into the buildings of children next to them. In an area with materials for make-believe, children enact an elaborate family scenario after resolving who will be the mommy, who will be the grandpa and who will be the puppy. Another group peers through a magnifying glass to examine a collection of pine cones and acorns. On the rug, children lie on their stomachs turning the pages of books they have selected, while at the easel a boy dips his brush into red paint and swoops the paint mostly onto his paper.

The teacher observes and comments. She shifts from group to group, talking with children about their work ("I see that you made a big red circle."); helping children resolve a conflict ("You both want to be the mommy. What should we do?"); posing an open-ended question to stimulate exploration and problem-solving ("What do you notice when you use the magnifying glass that is different from when you use your eyes?"); and guiding children to manage themselves ("When you finish your snack, what activity would you like to choose?").

Barbara Biber, one of Bank Street's early theorists, argued that play develops precisely the skills — and, just as important, the disposition — children need to be successful throughout their lives. The child "projects his own pattern of the world into the play," she wrote, "and in so doing brings the real world closer to himself. He is building the feeling that the world is his to understand, to interpret, to puzzle about, to make over. For the future we need citizens in whom these attitudes are deeply ingrained."

Earlier in the 20th century, the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky made the related argument that children's thinking develops through activity-based learning and social interactions with adults and peers. When teachers base their curriculums on Dr. Vygotsky's ideas, there are significant benefits for children's capacity to think, to plan and to sustain their attention on difficult tasks.

Play has long-lasting benefits. What is referred to as self-regulation in preschool becomes resiliency in high school. The University of Pennsylvania psychologist Angela Duckworth has found that this trait, which she famously calls grit, can make or break students, especially low-income students. Over the past three years, the New York City Department of Education developed a framework to support the core behavioral elements that drive college and career readiness. Many of them — persistence, planning, the ability to communicate and the capacity to collaborate — have their roots in early childhood.

Next fall, there will be more students in pre-K in New York City than there are in the entire school system of Atlanta or Seattle. To his credit, Mayor Bill de Blasio has not only pushed for expanding access but has also insisted on improving quality and put real money into training and materials. This is a strong start. But we still need to help parents, administrators and policy makers see what the children themselves know intuitively: Classrooms that pulse with meaningful play are our smartest investment.

Shael Polakow-Suransky, who served as senior deputy chancellor of the New York City Department of Education from 2011-14, is the president of Bank Street College, where Nancy Nager is a professor of education and child development.

Putin And The Pope

By Thomas L. Friedman

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Reading the papers these days I find that the two world leaders who stir the most passion in me are Pope Francis and Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia. One is everything you'd want in a leader, the other everything you wouldn't want. One holds sway over 1.2 billion Roman Catholics, the other over nine time zones. One keeps surprising me with his capacity for empathy, the other by how much he has become a first-class jerk and thug. But neither can be ignored and both have an outsized influence on the world today.

First, the pope. At a time when so many leaders around the world are looking to promote their political fortunes by exploiting grievances and fault lines, we have a pope asking his flock to do something hard, something outside their comfort zone, pushing them to be more inclusive of gays and divorced people.

Yes, Francis was rebuffed by conservative bishops at a recent Vatican synod when he asked them to embrace the notion that "homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community," adding, "are we capable of welcoming these people, guaranteeing to them a fraternal space in our communities?"

But, as an editorial in this paper noted: "The very fact that Francis ordered church leaders to address these challenges seems a landmark in Vatican history." The pope asked that rejected language be published for all to see, while also cautioning against "hostile inflexibility — that is, wanting to close oneself within the written word, and not allowing oneself to be surprised by God."

"Hostile inflexibility?" Whose leadership does that describe? Look at Putin's recent behavior: His military was indirectly involved in downing a Malaysian airliner over Ukraine and his K.G.B. has not only been trying to take a bite out of Ukraine but are nibbling on Estonia, Georgia and Moldova, all under the guise of protecting "Russian speakers."

I opposed NATO expansion because I believed that there are few global problems that we can solve without the help of Russia. By expanding NATO at the end of the Cold War, when Russia was weak, we helped to cultivate a politics there that would one day be very receptive to Putin's message that the West is ganging up on Russia. But, that said, the message is a lie. The West has no intention of bringing Ukraine into NATO. And please raise your hand if you think the European Union plans to invade Russia.

Yet Putin just exploits these fears for two reasons. First, he has a huge chip on his shoulder — no, excuse me; he has a whole lumberyard there — of resentment that Russia is no longer the global power it once was. But rather than make Russia great again by tapping its creative people — empowering them with education, the rule of law and consensual politics to realize their full potential — he has opted for the shortcut of tapping his oil and gas wells and seizing power from his people.

And instead of creating a Russia that is an example to its neighbors, he relies on the brute force that his oil and gas can still buy him. While he rails against NATO, he is really afraid of European Union expansion — that Ukrainians would rather embrace the E.U. market and democracy rules than their historical ties to Russia because they know that through the E.U. they can realize potentials that would never be possible with Russia.

By seizing Crimea and stoking up nationalism, Putin was not protecting Russia from NATO. He was protecting himself from the viruses of E.U. accountability and transparency, which, if they took hold in Ukraine, could spread to Moscow, undermining his kleptocracy.

Normally, I wouldn't care, but when the world is dividing between zones of order and disorder, and the world of order needs to be collaborating to stem and reverse disorder, the fact that Putin is stoking disorder on Russia's borders, and not collaborating to promote order in the Middle East, is a real problem. What's more worrying is that the country he threatens most is Russia. If things go bad there — and its economy is already sagging under Western sanctions — the world of disorder will get a lot bigger.

That is why Putin's leadership matters, and so does the pope's. I'm focused on Putin because I think he is making the world a worse place for bad reasons, when he could make a difference in Europe and the Middle East with just an ounce more decency and collaboration. America, too, has plenty to learn from the pope's humility, but say what you will, we're still focused on trying to strengthen the global commons, whether by protecting people from jihadists in Iraq or fighting Ebola in Africa. We could do more. Putin needs to do a lot more.

"The best leaders don't set timid and selfish goals that are easy to meet but instead set bold and inclusive goals that are hard to achieve," remarked Timothy Shriver, the chairman of Special Olympics, who has just written a book on leadership, "Fully Alive: Discovering What Matters Most." "We're all looking for ways to make sense of a world without a center, but we'll only find that in people who lead with authentic humility and reckless generosity."

(Only) Two Rules For A Good Diet

By Mark Bittman

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO — To a large extent, you can fix the food system in your world today. Three entities are involved in creating our food choices: business (everything from farmers to PepsiCo), government (elected and appointed officials and their respective organizations) and the one with the greatest leverage, the one that you control: you.

We shouldn't discount small farms and businesses, nor should we ignore relatively minor officials like the mayor of El Monte, Calif., who tried (and failed) to establish a soda tax to benefit public health. We do not always know where real change will come from, and certainly smaller operations may be more innovative and show us the way.

But for the most part we know where real change doesn't come from: Big Food, the corporations that supply most of the food and stuff masquerading as food that's sold in supermarkets, as fast food and in casual dining chains; and government, especially the federal government, which is beholden to and entranced by big business. Nothing new here.

There often seem to be more happy exceptions in industry than in government. If you look at the relatively new companies that have blazed a path for the food industry, you see, among others, Whole Foods and Chipotle. One demonstrated that supermarkets could sell better ingredients; the other opened the door to non-junkie fast food.

Neither is above criticism, and it's possible both will be surpassed within a few years by newcomers with fresher and better ways of doing things. Still, it's comforting to know that at least somewhere in the corners of this food system, market competition is giving opportunities to clever and even well-intentioned people to figure out how to make real money by actually providing the public with better food.

I'm especially impressed with the way Whole Foods is innovating in the arena of labeling, gradually extending its own internal labeling system from fish to meats and now to fruits and vegetables. (As I said, though, they're hardly above criticism.) Marketing is of course part of it, but shoppers who want to talk back to the supply chain by knowing where their food comes from don't otherwise have a way to do that.

If Whole Foods gives them what they want, then despite the “Whole Paycheck” nickname (and there’s some evidence that Whole Foods is starting to compete on price as well), those who can get there and afford it will favor it. This is progress, doing well by doing at least some good, and that can’t be said about most corporations involved in food. See, for example, the too-little-too-late attempt at transparency by McDonald’s.

We can’t rely on even well-intentioned souls in industry, but given the ball-dropping entity that is supposed to be vigilant regarding our health and welfare — the federal government — we have little choice. The legislative branch isn’t worth discussing, and leadership from the executive branch has been disappointing. Two issues could have been improved definitively in the last six years — the marketing of junk to kids and the existence of antibiotics in our food supply — and President Obama has accomplished little in either case. However stymied he may have been, we are looking at a landscape that hasn’t changed much, the exception being the improved but still hotly contested school food programs supported by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

Even worse are the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, the last of which refuses to ban the routine use of antibiotics in animal production despite knowing that a ban is possible and desirable. It’s also dawdling on mandating an improved nutrition label on packaged food, probably because of industry taking “interest.”

We shouldn’t need to rely on Whole Foods for good labeling. Yet every day I’m asked, “How do I know that what I’m buying is O.K.?” It seems the better educated and more concerned people are about this, the more confused they are. Drill deep enough and the list to worry about becomes overwhelming: organics, genetically modified organisms, carbon footprint, packaging, fair trade, waste, labor, animal welfare and for all I know the quality of the water that’s being used to wash your organic greens.

I get this. I’m a worrier, too, though I tend to expend my neurotic energy on different topics. The overall environment means that you’re pretty much on your own if you try to eat healthfully in spite of the system, and you must take up that battle through a dozen or more decisions each day. But there are two big decisions that can put you on the right path and help you largely steer clear of antibiotics, excess sugar, unwanted chemicals, animal cruelty, and more.

Here then, is your two-step guide for an unassailably powerful personal food policy.

1. Stop eating junk and hyperprocessed food. This eliminates probably 80 percent of the stuff that is being sold as “food.”

2. Eat more plants than you did yesterday, or last year.

If you add “Cook your own food” to this list, it’s even more powerful, but these two steps alone allow you to reduce the amount of antibiotics you’re consuming; pretty much eliminate GMOs from your diet, lighten your carbon footprint; reduce your chances of becoming ill as a result of your diet; save money; cut way back on sugar, other junk and unnecessary and potentially harmful nonfood additives; and so on.

All without relying on corporate benevolence or the government getting things right. The power lies with you.

Would Stronger Parties Mean Less Polarization?

By Thomas B. Edsall

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Ever since they emerged in the early 1800s, political parties have been a target of public scorn. But they have always had their defenders — a smaller, less influential camp that holds that parties are more beneficial than harmful because they play an essential role in mediating political disputes.

The anti-party forces fitfully succeed in enacting laws and rules to restrain party organizations and bosses, including the adoption of referendum and recall procedures; requirements that states pick delegates to the national conventions through primaries and caucuses; bans on closed-door meetings; the prohibition of legislative earmarks; and legislation that restricts the size and source of contributions to the national political parties.

The intensity of polarized politics at every level of government now puts the dispute over political parties at the center of a debate among office holders, political scientists, legal experts and partisan activists. Is it possible that strengthening the parties could lessen polarization?

The pro-party camp contends that many reforms have unintentionally fostered polarization: diminishing the clout of parties and party leaders undermines their role as a force for moderation and compromise.

Nathaniel Persily, a professor of law at Stanford, is a proponent of strong, well-financed parties. Polarization, he wrote in an email to me, “is a cost of many of these good government reforms. It is almost an intended cost if you think about it.” Why? Persily argues that the purpose of

In “Strengthening Parties,” a chapter in the forthcoming volume “Solutions to Political Polarization in America,” Persily contends that in the case of campaign finance, “the good good-government reforms that have been tried have, if anything, made things worse.”

The claim that reforms have made things worse is based on the interaction between the 2002 McCain-Feingold Act, which regulated campaign finance, and two 2010 court decisions, the Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United* and the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit decision *Speechnow.org v. F.E.C.*

The McCain-Feingold Act prohibited political parties from accepting unlimited contributions from corporations, unions and rich people, which had come to be called “soft money.”

The federal court decisions, in contrast, explicitly allowed independent political groups – including both super PACs and politically active nonprofits – to accept all forms of soft money.

Pro-party advocates argue that McCain-Feingold in particular has undermined political parties, while court rulings have empowered donors and independent committees, many of whom have agendas more polarizing than those of the parties.

At a Bipartisan Policy Center conference in Washington earlier this month organized to explore the current campaign finance situation, Ray La Raja, a political scientist at the University of Massachusetts, made a case, like Persily, in support of political parties:

La Raja, who has been working with Brian F. Schaffner, another UMass political scientist, presented slides comparing states that limit contributions to political parties with states without such limits. In the states without limits, a much higher proportion of the total contributions to candidates, especially to centrist-moderate candidates, comes from the parties than it does in states with limits. In addition, the degree of ideological polarization between Republicans and Democrats in legislatures in states without limits is substantially lower than it is in states with limits, as Figure 1 demonstrates.

Thomas E. Mann, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who is a strong supporter of McCain-Feingold, disagrees with Persily and La Raja. At the conference, and in later email exchanges, Mann made a number of key points.

First of all, Mann contends, Republicans are the driving force behind polarization. Their opposition to Democratic proposals is based less on ideological principle than on a strategic political decision to oppose President Obama on every front, even when he takes a position previously advocated by

conservatives. Examples of the latter include the individual mandate under Obamacare and end-of-life counseling.

“Much of the acrimony and gridlock is not a consequence” of ideological issues or campaign finance, Mann told participants at the conference. Instead, he argues, “it’s strategic – it’s all about capturing a majority in the House and Senate, and the White House.”

According to Mann,

Michael Barber, a political scientist at Brigham Young University who supports strong political parties, provided evidence to the conference that altering campaign finance laws has significant costs and benefits — trade-offs in every direction.

Barber presented slides that showed that individual contributors to candidates are strikingly ideological and partisan, thus fueling polarization. That is, contributions from traditional PACs, which give relatively small amounts directly to candidates, are focused on the goal of gaining access, and thus are far more politically centrist (Figure 2).

In a working paper on the impact that campaign finance regulation has on state elected officials, Barber found that “legislators who raise more money from individuals are more likely to be ideologically extreme,” while “higher limits on contributions from PACs yield more ideologically moderate legislators.”

One interpretation of Barber’s findings is that a reduction in the number of contributions from individual donors, including small donors, would diminish ideological conflict. This would mean, in effect, abandoning the long-sought goal of increasing participation in the campaign finance process. Conversely, by this reasoning, advocates of increased participation by small donors will have to tolerate exacerbated polarization and gridlock if they are successful.

I asked Barber in an email about these conflicts, and he wrote that

Not an attractive option for either side. Reformers and party loyalists both face what Persily describes as “a devil’s choice.”

McCain-Feingold does appear to have contributed to a decline in Republican Party fund-raising, and to the end of rising cash totals for Democratic Party committees. According to the Campaign Finance Institute, Democratic Party fund-raising grew from \$229.8 million in 1992 to \$626.5 million in 2000, the last presidential election year in which soft money contributions were permitted. Since then, Democratic totals have remained virtually level, reaching \$631.1 million in 2012 (all these figures are adjusted for inflation).

On the Republican side, the post-McCain-Feingold election years have produced a substantial decline in donations, which fell to \$697.7 million in 2012 from \$815.3 million in 2000.

But insofar as the parties are struggling, it is far more the result of court rulings that have led to an explosion of outside spending, which, in key battleground contests in the current election cycle, often eclipses spending by the parties.

Experts who are at the heart of these developments argue that the courts over the past four years have tipped the balance in favor of independent political committees. Bob Bauer, a prominent Democratic campaign finance lawyer who spoke at the Washington conference, noted that “there are enormous differences between parties and outside groups,” but the legal system now “privileges the groups.”

The result is a distorted balance of financial and political power with the least accountable organizations gaining the most leverage over our campaigns. And yet, as we try to fix that problem and to address the general disrepute into which American politics has fallen, we have to think hard about how the unintended consequences of prior efforts at reform have helped to bring us where we are now.

A Nuclear Deal, Now Or Never

By Vali R. Nasr

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

WASHINGTON — Like it or not, the calendar of voting — here and in Iran — is driving the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. A first, easy prediction: Don't expect progress in the few days that remain until America's Election Day. But then the tempo could ratchet up quickly. And it had better, if we are to expect a nuclear deal at all.

The clock begins ticking on Election Day because Nov. 24 is the target date for a comprehensive agreement. But until the next Congress is chosen on Nov. 4, the Americans can't make politically risky promises and the Iranians can't react, not knowing where the balance of power between Republicans and Democrats will lie.

Slightly more than a year from now, Iran will hold its own elections, which will ultimately decide who its next top leader will be. Given that the current supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has set the balance of power between reformists and hard-liners, that choice could well change the direction of Iranian policy making on any potential deal for a very long time.

These storm clouds will narrow the diplomats' room to maneuver as each election approaches. But they will also part long enough, between election seasons, to perhaps allow for dramatic new proposals and agreements. It is a complicated game: The elections affect the talks, and the rate of progress in the talks determines how voters feel. Each side must calculate not just how a final deal would resonate at home, but also when it would strengthen the hand of its most desired partner on the other side.

Here is how this interwoven calendar is likely to play out:

2014: The United States pegged the negotiations to its political calendar when it fixed the deadline for a final deal after next month's election. The calculation assumed that once the next Congress's makeup was known, Iranian negotiators who sought a deal would be eager to consummate one in plenty of time to show voters a rising economy, based on sanctions relief. If the Republicans do as well as expected, the Obama administration would also want to consolidate a deal quickly, before the new Congress meets in January. In theory, then, the best chance for a deal is in the next few months, when both sides' political motivations converge.

But there is a big problem: The sides remain far apart. The United States and its partners insist that Iran cut its enrichment capability enough to preclude a rapid breakout toward producing a nuclear weapon; Iran refuses to consider any cut that could seem to dismantle its nuclear program. Iran also seeks full and immediate relief from economic sanctions; its opponents reject that as imprudent and impractical. Any deal would require both sides to compromise. And even a signed deal would be attacked by hard-liners in both countries, especially if President Obama bypassed Congress and suspended most sanctions on his own. Iran would be skeptical, since the next president could restore them.

Does that mean a quick deal is not in the cards, forcing the talks to be extended well into next year? Not necessarily — even if the Republicans win big next month. In that case, Iran would question whether the next Congress would go along with any sanctions relief. And the weaker the Obama administration looked to Iranian negotiators, the more they would ask for broader sanctions relief up front.

That would in turn make it more difficult for the administration to sell such an agreement to the current Congress — unless, of course, the Iranians significantly changed course on their demands to keep their enrichment program. So a big Republican win would only increase pressure on Mr. Obama and Iran to settle now or never.

The other option — reset the clock and hope for a solid deal to emerge more slowly — is a poorer bet. The reason lies in the next election cycle.

2015: In December 2015, Iran will elect a new Parliament. Within months, voters will also choose a Council of Experts, who in turn will pick the next supreme religious leader. Knowing how large those stakes are, Iran's negotiators already have their eyes on those elections. So should the American negotiators, because the date of any agreement could decide them.

At the moment, Parliament is controlled by hard-liners. To change that, President Hassan Rouhani needs the economic benefits that a nuclear deal can bring. And he needs them soon, if they are to impress voters. In other words, the longer it takes to get a deal, the less likely it is that it can help Mr. Rouhani. Iran's conservatives know that: If a deal is reached at all, they want it later rather than sooner.

Put that calendar together, and a strategy for America is clear. While the United States and its allies must achieve their core goals — effectively and dependably blocking Iran's path to a nuclear bomb — in any compromises they make, they need to remember, too, that getting a deal itself could be a game-changer in Iranian politics. The bet they should be making is on offering one while they still can; their counterparts are, after all, Iranian politicians whose interests lie in both achieving a nuclear deal and opening up their country. If the talks don't bear fruit soon, our narrow window of opportunity will shut, and the West will most likely have to contend with a far more recalcitrant Iran in an unstable Middle East.

The Iranian hard-liners are betting that a turn to the right in America would sink the talks, and that an end to talks would hand them a long-term victory in Iran. So even if Congress turns further rightward, we need to quicken the negotiations and achieve a deal as soon as possible. The longer it takes, the more likely it is that politics here and in Iran will ultimately coalesce to sink any deal at all.

Vali R. Nasr, the dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is the author of "The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat."

Russia Today, Argentina Tomorrow

By Fabián Bosoer And Federico Finchelstein

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Earlier this month, the president of Russia, Vladimir V. Putin, and the president of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, took part in a video conference to celebrate a new television partnership. Under the terms of the deal, the Russian-owned channel RT (formerly known as Russia Today) will soon begin broadcasting Spanish-language news in Argentina. Mrs. Kirchner hailed the development as a means for Argentines "to understand the real Russia," as well as to help Russians learn about "the real Argentina, unlike the way the international media and the so-called national media portray us."

Buenos Aires currently enjoys warm relations with Moscow for a variety of reasons. Argentina is looking to Russia for help in upgrading its energy sector, including a possible partnership with the Russian giant Gazprom to develop oil and shale gas production in Argentina.

The cooperation extends to diplomatic relations, too. Argentina has backed Russia's position on Ukraine, while Mr. Putin has offered political support in Argentina's international legal dispute with so-called vulture funds over the value of defaulted government bonds.

Evident in the TV deal, though, was a more disturbing convergence between the two states: a shared vision of the role that the mass media should play in the government and public life of the nation. "We are achieving a communication without intermediaries," said Mrs. Kirchner, "in order to transmit our own values." This approach was echoed by Mr. Putin, who spoke of an expanding electronic media environment as "a formidable weapon that enables public opinion manipulations."

The Spanish version of RT is intended as an antidote to the toxic influence of foreign media channels “that transmit news based on their interests,” as Mrs. Kirchner put it. The Spanish-language RT deal mirrors the Venezuelan-Argentine venture in the public news channel Telesur, in which Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Ecuador and Uruguay also have minority stakes. Like Telesur, RT is presented not merely as an option in a pluralistic media landscape, but as the channel representing the true national cultures of each country in which it broadcasts.

From Ecuador to Venezuela, the conflation of state media, private media ownership by politicians and their cronies and party propaganda has been a prominent aspect of Latin American populism during its first decade of ascendancy. As the recent re-election of President Evo Morales in Bolivia shows, these populist leaders continue to enjoy broad support. But in Bolivia, as elsewhere in Latin America, these leaders have also manufactured their support by co-opting the power of state media and by marginalizing more critical elements of the independent media.

In Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, the typical strategy is to use antitrust laws to force commercial media groups to break up and sell off assets, which are then acquired by pro-government investors. For example, just days before Argentina’s deal with RT became public, the government agency assigned to enforce the country’s new media law announced that it would seek to dismember the audiovisual arm of the Clarín media group (which also publishes Argentina’s principal newspaper of the same name, where one of us works as a journalist).

In Venezuela, the influential opposition newspaper *Tal Cual*, edited by the veteran left-wing politician Teodoro Petkoff, has announced its imminent closure — a situation described by the Inter-American Press Association as symptomatic of “the siege on the critical or independent press in Venezuela,” where almost all TV channels and radio stations have come under government control. In Ecuador, after the newspaper *Hoy* was forced into partial closure when the government imposed an advertising boycott, its director attacked the country’s new media law for “criminalizing journalistic work.”

The populist rhetoric against critical newspapers and journalists is that they must be penalized as part of a struggle against the “economic interests” of private owners that are opposed to the common good. The roots of such populism can be traced to widespread grievances about the failures of the “Washington consensus,” which made the continent a laboratory for neoliberal economics and imposed considerable hardships. With charismatic leadership, populism has proved remarkably successful in electoral terms. But there is a difference between winning elections and a truly democratic culture, and Latin America’s populist leaders have amassed enormous power even as they expanded social rights.

The increasingly harsh media policy does not alone explain populism’s success, but it certainly helps promote its case. Among Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, there are important distinctions in the style and character of state interference with press freedom, but all of these populist administrations have harassed independent journalists. And in all of these countries, there has been a consolidation of what is, in effect, state propaganda.

To be sure, the anti-populist opposition used similar authoritarian tactics in the past — and might still do so, if permitted. But the populists have made this merger of state media and party messaging an essential condition for their rule of these democratic societies.

In its first decade, Latin American populism stressed the value of the state as the protector of the most excluded sectors of society and as the promoter of their interests. There have been major progressive achievements, reversing a legacy of social inequality. But as it moves into its second decade in power, populism seems engaged in a campaign to degrade independent journalism. Does Latin America really wish to emulate Mr. Putin’s approach to media freedom?

Fabián Bosoer is an opinion editor at the Argentine newspaper Clarín. Federico Finchelstein is the chairman of the history department at the New School for Social Research.

Brazilians Are Shocked, Shocked At Corruption!

By Antonio Prata

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

We Brazilians suffer from a curious cognitive dysfunction, which occurs with the same frequency in our population as lactose intolerance does among the Japanese, or the inclination for punning among the English. We have the ability to be outraged by corruption, while engaging in our own petty versions of it.

As the second round of presidential voting approaches on Sunday, this evil is spreading like an epidemic. In bars, on the streets and on social networks, advocates of Dilma Rousseff, the Workers Party candidate for re-election, and Senator Aécio Neves, of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, never tire of reminding us of the “robberies” that their rivals commit.

Workers Party supporters cite the re-election scandal in which Social Democrats were accused of bribing congressmen to approve a constitutional amendment allowing Fernando Henrique Cardoso to compete again for the presidency in 1998. Social Democrats’ supporters mention the “Mensalão,” a case in which congressmen allied with the Workers Party regularly received money diverted from Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s illegal campaign contributions. Those not involved in the party squabbles tend to blame all the politicians, as if the politicians were a separate species, able to corrupt our reputable citizens.

Our citizens don’t really need the help.

My introduction to Brazilians’ cavalier attitude toward corruption came through family. When I was about 7 years old, we went to a Sunday lunch at my uncle Arthur’s. Arthur (not his real name) was my richest uncle, and he lived in a house with a pool. During lunch, he proudly told our family he had found a way to turn off the water register in front of the house and could now fill his pool for free. I do not remember any member of my family reprimanding him.

Today, my uncle is retired, and he sends me angry emails about the corruption in the Workers Party government.

I would like to believe that the country’s advancements in recent decades have made us more ethical, but that is not the case. A friend of mine, a lawyer in her 30s, has a hairdresser’s license so she can get discounts on shampoo. She is a partner in a tax law firm and earns enough in a year to pay for shampoo for three future generations of her family.

A psychoanalyst whom I consulted years ago proposed to charge me less if I paid for my sessions in cash, thus allowing him to bypass the tax authorities.

In Rio de Janeiro, when you ask a taxi driver for a receipt, the usual response is, “What value do you want me to put in?” The reason being, the driver can give you a receipt with an inflated charge that allows you to steal 10 or 20 reais from your employer. Of course, in return for this “favor,” he expects a small percentage in cash.

Even when we go to the movies, Brazilians find a way to bend the rules — if there is a line we will look for a friend who is in a better position and think nothing of jumping ahead. But on Facebook and Twitter, the two parties, or politicians in general, clearly are to blame for all our adversities.

Sure there have been advances in the 20 years that the parties have been in power. Under Mr. Cardoso (1995-2003), hyperinflation ended, the Brazilian real was strengthened, and the economy improved. Mr. da Silva (2003-2011) and Ms. Rousseff (2011 to date) deepened and extended social programs that have lifted more than 40 million people out of poverty. These advances, however, were

made without putting an end to old problems: spurious alliances to obtain the majority in Congress, the exchange of favors, cronyism and corruption. These are traces of a country that emerged 514 years ago as Portugal's overseas pantry, where men were making money far from the law, the church and their wives — first, by exploiting pau brasil (a red tree whose sap was used to dye fabrics and that lent its name to our country), and after that by planting sugar cane, trafficking in slaves, and mining for gold and gems. Much of the disregard for consequences and of the expediency practiced by these explorers still exists today.

Am I the only Brazilian free of these traits? Of course not! Last year, I bought a refrigerator. The store said that, in addition to the delivery, they could install it for 450 reais. I thought that was expensive, and said I would do it myself. When the fridge arrived, however, I realized I couldn't handle it.

The delivery man coughed and proposed: "If you want it, I can install it now, for 100 reais, but the people from the store cannot find out."

"Sure," I nodded. Uncle Arthur would have been proud of me.

The other day, looking at that fridge, I realized that it is an image of today's Brazil: powerful, showy, forward-looking, but working on the old connections we insist on perpetuating. President Rousseff or Senator Neves will win the election, but it will take longer to solve the problems that hold back Brazil from being a great country.

Antonio Prata is a columnist for the newspaper Folha de São Paulo.

The Dirty Effects Of Mountaintop Removal Mining

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

FOR DECADES, coal companies have been removing mountain peaks to haul away coal lying just underneath. More recently, scientists and regulators have been developing a clearer understanding of the environmental consequences. They aren't pretty.

In the 1990s, coal miners began using large equipment to strip away mountaintops in states such as West Virginia. The technique made it economical for them to extract more coal from troublesome seams in the rock, which might be too small for traditional mining or lodged in unstable formations. Environmentalists were appalled, but the practice spread and now accounts for more than 40 percent of West Virginia coal production.

Burning coal has a host of drawbacks: It produces both planet-warming carbon dioxide and deadly conventional air pollutants. Removing layers of mountaintop in the extraction process aggravates the damage. The displaced earth must go somewhere, typically into adjoining valleys, affecting the streams that run through them. The dust that's blown into the air on mountaintop removal sites, meanwhile, is suspected to be unhealthy for mine workers and nearby communities.

Scientists have recently produced evidence backing up both concerns. Over the summer, a U.S. Geological Survey study compared streams near mountaintop removal operations to streams farther away. In what should be "a global hotspot for fish biodiversity," according to Nathaniel Hitt, one of the authors, the researchers found decimated fish populations, with untold consequences for downstream river systems. The scientists noted changes in stream chemistry: Salts from the disturbed earth appear to have dissolved in the water, which may well have disrupted the food chain.

Last week, the Charleston Gazette reported on a new study finding that dust from mountaintop removal mining appears to contribute to greater risk of lung cancer. West Virginia University researchers took dust samples from several towns near mountaintop removal sites and tested them on lung cells, which changed for the worse. The findings fit into a larger, hazardous picture: People living near these sites experience higher rates of cancer and birth defects.

With these sorts of problems in mind, the Environmental Protection Agency is taking a more skeptical look at mountaintop removal mining permits. The Clean Water Act gives the government wide authority over industrial operations that change rivers and streams. The EPA has already used it to revoke a permit from a controversial proposed mountaintop removal mine in Logan County, W.Va. The agency has also instructed its branch offices to be more careful about mountaintop removal projects that could change nearby water chemistry.

The coal industry and its allies are howling. Skeptics of mountaintop removal, one industry pamphlet insisted, “promote an anti-coal, anti-business agenda that uses environmental issues as a mere pawn to redistribute wealth, grab power, and put forth liberal, social ideology.” The GOP-controlled House passed a bill that would strip the EPA of some of its permitting power. But just this month the Obama administration once again prevailed in court, beating back another industry challenge.

The emerging scientific evidence should cut through the rhetoric. The EPA is right to move more firmly to protect health and environment.

On Marijuana Legalization Plans, The District Should Slow Down

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

MOST VOTES have yet to be cast in the District’s referendum on legalizing marijuana, but the D.C. Council is already making plans on how to regulate sales. The premature move is in keeping with the heedless rush to put the city’s imprimatur on use of a drug whose impacts are still not fully known. It is not too late for more prudent judgment to prevail; voters on Nov. 4 could slow the push for legalization by voting no on Initiative 71.

The ballot initiative to be decided in the Nov. 4 general election would make it lawful for a person 21 years of age or older to possess up to two ounces of marijuana for personal use, to grow up to six plants at home and to transfer without payment up to one ounce of marijuana to another person 21 years or older. Because of the District’s restrictions on what is subject to ballot approval, the initiative would not allow for sale of marijuana, creating a situation where having marijuana would be legal but getting it might require illegal acts.

A joint committee hearing will be held Oct. 30 on legislation to establish a taxation and regulation infrastructure for marijuana production and sale. Vincent B. Orange (D-At Large), chairman of the business and consumer committee that will hold the hearing with the finance committee, said the city needs to be prepared to move forward if the initiative passes, which, based on polls, he believes will be the case, and if Congress doesn’t intervene, about which he won’t hazard a guess.

Much of the District’s debate about Initiative 71 has centered on matters of race and social justice. That was a serious issue when marijuana possession was subject to criminal prosecution and African Americans accounted for an outsize proportion of those arrested. But since decriminalization went into effect in July, possession is now subject to just a \$25 fine, among the lowest in the nation. As The Post’s Marc Fisher recently detailed, some leaders in the African American community worry that legalization would not keep more young blacks out of jail because a more readily available drug could lead young people to harder drugs. “Scratch the surface of most homicides and rape cases, and the perpetrators were high on drugs, including marijuana,” said Arthur Burnett of the National African American Drug Policy Coalition.

We are not in the Reefer Madness school of marijuana prohibition. We favored decriminalization. But the drug can have harmful effects; Its active ingredient has been linked to memory problems, impaired thinking and weakened immune systems. And we question whether it is possible to legalize the drug for adults without sending a message to youth that its use is risk-free.

By waiting, the District would benefit from ongoing scientific research as well as the experience of states that only recently have legalized marijuana. It is easier to let a genie out of the bottle than to try to stuff one back in.

How Ben Bradlee Transformed The Washington Post

By Editorial Board

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

BENJAMIN C. Bradlee, who died Tuesday at the age of 93, was the architect and builder of the modern Washington Post. His conviction that even the most powerful should be held to a standard of truth-telling inspired journalists well beyond The Post. His exuberance at work and in life served as a model well beyond journalism.

As managing editor and then executive editor from 1965 to 1991, Mr. Bradlee liked to roam the sprawling newsroom. Once he came up to a young journalist on the National staff, hired just months before, whose story was on Page One that day. Mr. Bradlee jabbed a finger at the front-page story. “Nothing like this!” he said, with a broad, knowing smile.

There was nothing like working for him, either. His enthusiasm was infectious. When Mr. Bradlee stopped to ask what was going on, reporters eagerly shared a tantalizing idea or tip. “Worth a phone call,” Mr. Bradlee often replied, and he needed say no more. His newsroom crackled with the energy of a modern startup. A certain “creative tension” was the reality, a competition among reporters and editors to win his approval. Mr. Bradlee loved the chase and the thrill of discovery.

Mr. Bradlee called reporters “the best lie detectors,” and nothing mattered more to him than exposing the truth, even if it took a long time. In his own account, the Vietnam War and then Watergate marked a crisis of confidence in American society, brought on by leaders who did not level with the people. In the Pentagon Papers, excerpts of which he published despite government threats, Mr. Bradlee saw proof that the American people had not been told the truth about decisions made to escalate the war. Then came Watergate and his determination to find out what really happened. He was outraged at President Nixon’s behavior. Nixon “lied over and over again with intent to deceive the American public and thereby save his ass from the consequences of his crimes,” Mr. Bradlee wrote in his memoir. The newspaper won global recognition for coverage that led to the president’s resignation, but the lesson for journalists was in Mr. Bradlee’s fusion of doggedness, fearlessness and professionalism.

His management could be erratic, and he made mistakes, but Mr. Bradlee never tired of looking for the finest talent, both established and upcoming. Early on he lured David S. Broder from the New York Times and Haynes Johnson from the Washington Evening Star. They helped define the era. “The more we found, the hungrier we got,” he recalled. He invented the Style section, capturing in the newspaper the magic of the “New Journalism” then popular in magazines — provocative, literary, probing, sassy and swashbuckling. He was impatient with mediocrity and flackery. He relished stylish writing and reporters who were fast off the mark.

What Mr. Bradlee built at The Post could not have been achieved without the support of the Graham family, which invested generously in his ambitions and courageously stood behind his editorial decisions. Katharine Graham named Mr. Bradlee managing editor in 1965, and their partnership and shared vision spanned a generation of growth in the newspaper’s stature and profitability. Donald E. Graham, who did so much to lead the newspaper in the next generation, never forgot Mr. Bradlee’s contribution. As he said at his retirement in 1991, “It’s Bradlee’s paper.”

Ben Bradlee, A Hero To The Post Newsroom

By Donald Graham

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

In the next few days you will hear real sadness from hundreds of people who work or used to work at The Post. I would like to tell you why we all loved Ben Bradlee so much — loved working for him, loved working with him — and why we felt he could make anything possible.

When my mother, Katharine Graham, picked Ben to be managing editor of The Post in 1965 and then executive editor in 1968 — her first significant action as publisher — the two of them held huge ambitions for the paper. Ben's ambition had taught him one thing: He had to work hard. "I knew it would take thousands of extra hours to begin to know what to do." But he had borne plenty of responsibility early in his life (he served as a officer on a destroyer in the Pacific in World War II), and as he wrote later: "I was aching to do it."

As he settled in, Kay Graham was watching. Never sure of herself and prone to second-guessing her judgment, she knew she had made the perfect choice. "He's there nights, he's there weekends," she told those around her. "And you should see the people he's hiring."

That was what Ben concentrated on: hiring. "There was so much I didn't know — about presses, about composing rooms, about budgets," Ben wrote, "that I decided to concentrate on the one thing I did know: good reporters."

They were good, and they were tough. Among his first hires were Richard Harwood, who had lost a lung in the invasion of Tarawa in 1943, and Ward Just, who would later be wounded in Vietnam. David Broder was another crucial early hire.

Bradlee roamed the building, prodding the production and advertising departments as well as the newsroom. He wanted to make things much better — now. He wasn't always right, but he helped Kay get a far better understanding of where the Post's problems lay.

It was perfect preparation for the paper's watershed moment: the 1971 decision to print the stories based on the Pentagon Papers. The New York Times had spent months preparing a series of stories based on these top-secret documents, but it was enjoined by a federal court from printing more after the first ones appeared. One day after the injunction was issued, Daniel Ellsberg gave the papers to The Post. Bradlee and his team were pushing hard to print their story the following day. But every lawyer in the place was opposed.

Ben knew the next step, the only step that would give Kay the confidence she needed to publish. Without authorization, he called a greater lawyer, his friend Edward Bennett Williams. They had met when Ben was a Post reporter covering the U.S. District Court in Washington and Ed was flamboyantly winning cases and building his reputation. Summoned by a note begging him to ask for a recess in a Chicago trial and call Bradlee, the football-loving Williams heard the story and said, "Christ, Benjy, you're behind 28-0, and it's the fourth quarter. You've got to print."

Williams, at the time, didn't represent The Post. But facing supremely high stakes (among other things, the Washington Post Co. was going public that week; there had also been a clear threat made to our television-station licenses), Kay decided to print the story. Days later, the Supreme Court ruled that the newspapers could not be prevented from doing so.

The outcome of the Pentagon Papers case bred a perfect confidence between editor and publisher. When the Watergate stories came along, there was unhesitating support for the newsroom's work. As Kay put it later, "He set the ground rules — pushing, pushing, pushing, not so subtly asking everyone to

take one more step, relentlessly pursuing the story in the face of persistent accusations against us, and a concerted campaign of intimidation.”

Usually, Ben told her in advance when a big story was breaking. Once during Watergate, he did not. When reporter Carl Bernstein called Attorney General John Mitchell to ask about his control of a secret fund used to gather information on the Democrats, Mitchell exploded. “Katie Graham’s going to get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that’s published.” Ben didn’t get around to calling his publisher. After the story ran, he told her, “That was too good to check with you, Katharine.”

Through big stories and small — the Pentagon Papers and Watergate were only the beginning of it — those tough reporters on Ben’s staff came to know they were working for someone great. You could safely call the Post newsroom staff hard-bitten. They were men and women who had no heroes. But he was their hero.

It went both ways. In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision on the Pentagon Papers, here’s what he said to the newsroom: “The guts and energy and responsibility of everyone involved in this fight, and the sense that you were all involved, has impressed me more than anything in my life. You were beautiful.”

You too, Benjy.

Ben Bradlee Was A Leader And A Friend

By Richard Cohen

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Ben Bradlee would not have liked me to say so, but he was the living refutation of the Declaration of Independence: All men are not created equal. Certainly, he was not. He was born rich and well-connected, a member of the WASP tribe that once ran much of America and nearly all of its prestigious institutions. He was compellingly handsome and so smart that no crossword puzzle could really challenge him. It’s not that he didn’t have a weakness. He did. He was a sucker for the underdog.

If you could not be Ben Bradlee, then the next best thing was to be his friend. This was my unbounded good luck, and I watched him, always taking mental notes just to be a touch like him. I used to come into The Post’s newsroom early, and so did Bradlee. We would talk in the empty newsroom, going over the news and some gossip, and this is how I learned the answer to the question so many people had: What were his politics? Surely, he was a liberal. When asked, I would shake my head no.

Bradlee believed only in fairness — that and a bespoke Anglican God with a Back Bay accent. He would bridle at the efforts of the rich, the connected and, especially, their children to steal in the ways the rich always have, through investments and control of institutions. “What is it with you, Bradlee?” I once asked him. “Why do you like to poke your finger into the eye of your own people?” He laughed. “I don’t know. But I do.”

He had another belief. As an editor, he believed in the story. Was it true? Was it good? Was it great? Watergate was both true and great and, really, he bet his career on the work of two young reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. That is well-known — a book, a movie, more books, even more movies.

Less known is that powerful people would call and complain about this or that article and Bradlee, with a lethal insouciance, would essentially say that the facts were the facts. I can’t say he never killed a story (nothing important, that I know of), but the most chilling boasts of the powerful — “I can get that story killed” or “I know Ben Bradlee” — were never heard in Washington. If they really knew Bradlee, they knew their demands would be counterproductive. Threaten and the story would surely run. Hemingway, another newsman, popularized the phrase “grace under pressure.” It applied to Bradlee. It was another way of saying guts.

That, in short, is the way he ran The Post. The story — in other words, the reader — was everything. When he retired, a Post reporter prepared a story about him. It was too heavy with references to Bradlee as a Georgetown grandee, a martini-swirling socialite. Bradlee was offended by the story. He was a great American newspaper editor — maybe the greatest — and a World War II veteran as well. His Georgetown house was beside the point. He showed me the story. I was appalled, but Bradlee would not intervene. Later, a senior editor modified the piece.

I got an email the other day saying that a column of mine had received 955 comments by 8 a.m. That's my world now, but it was never Bradlee's. He did not edit by the numbers, giving the readers more of what they already had. There was no such thing as "trending" for him. He edited by instinct, by experience, by his gut. He led. He did not follow, and when he retired the entire newsroom rose as one — a football field of talent Bradlee had assembled — and applauded. I was coming toward him as he walked out with his wife, Sally Quinn. Our eyes met. His had a tear in it.

The word charismatic gets abused a lot, sometimes applied to politicians who get 51 percent of the vote. But Bradlee was the genuine article. Men were drawn to him, women, too, but that was a different matter. It's easy and sometimes squalid to be a ladies' man — not that Bradlee chose to be — but harder and rarer to be a leader of men, the kind of man whom other men both envy and follow. Bradlee had that quality, and he knew it, and when I mentioned it to him once, he said in that growly voice of his, "Eat your heart out, Cohen." I never did. It was simply too much fun just being with him.

Read more from Richard Cohen's archive.

Bears And Wolves Find A Voice In The Wilderness

By Kathleen Parker

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

If politicians preying upon your attentions this season fail to inspire, you might seek common cause with the beasts — the four-legged variety rather than those running for office.

Ballot initiatives aimed at protecting bears and wolves from hounding, trapping and other inhumane hunting practices are up for a vote in two states — Maine and Michigan.

Oh, be still thy twitching trigger finger. This isn't an anti-hunting column; it's a pro-humanity column. Ours. And the referendums, driven by the Humane Society of the United States, are aimed only at minimizing animal suffering and restoring a measure of decency and fair play in our dealings with creatures.

First the bears. Maine is the only state that still allows bear baiting, hounding and trapping. More than half of the 32 states with legal bear hunting allow hounding, a dozen allow baiting, and only Maine allows trapping for sport.

For clarification, hounding refers to the use of dogs that have been trained to chase bears relentlessly and then to corner or fight the poor beast. The bears have no choice but to turn to face a murderous pack or, exhausted, escape up a tree.

That's when the hunter, who, thanks to electronic tracking equipment, has been able to follow at a leisurely pace and safe distance, points his rifle and shoots the bear from a tree limb. Frances Macomber, the cowardly hunter of Hemingway's short, unhappy story, looks like a Maasai warrior by comparison.

Baiting means that a hunting guide strews rotting food in the woods and places a 55-gallon drum filled with jelly doughnuts, pizza, grease, fish guts and rotting beaver carcasses in a target spot. The "hunter," who likely has paid a fee to the "guide" for a "guaranteed kill," is provided a comfy seat to wait for the bear. Bam!

It's ironic — or something — that the same state fish and wildlife agency folks who post signs warning tourists not to feed the bears will allow other tourists to feed them for about \$2,000 to \$4,000 a pop. New signage might read: Kill what you feed.

The problem with baiting, beyond the obvious, is that it perpetuates an unhealthy cycle that only creates more problems — growing the bear population and making the bruins too comfortable around human areas — that hunters then use to justify more baiting and shooting. Avid hunter and writer Ted Williams, who wrote about bear baiting for Audubon magazine in 2005, calls it “garbaging for bears.”

Other states, such as Colorado, Oregon and Washington, meanwhile, have managed to maintain mostly stable bear populations without these inhumane practices. Plus, bear-hunting licenses in these states for fair-chase hunts have doubled or tripled.

A fair hunt may be more dangerous and require greater courage than shooting Winnie in a tree, but isn't that at least part of the point? It should be noted that the Maasai warrior, who carries a shield and a spear to hunt a lion, does sometimes lose.

In Michigan, wolves are the designated prey.

The Humane Society is campaigning there to stop the reopening of a wolf hunt, which has been deemed necessary largely because of human-wolf stories that were found to be false. In one true case, a farmer who lost several cattle to wolves had left several rotting cattle carcasses lying around. Talk about a baited field. Was he expecting squirrels?

Otherwise, the stories are mostly myths — wolves staring at humans through windows, stalking little girls in red capes, that sort of thing.

Although wolves have been removed from the endangered species list in Michigan, they number fewer than 650. Humane Society President and chief executive Wayne Pacelle fears that wolves will suffer the inhumane hunting practices — hounds and traps — seen in other states that are part of what he describes as “anti-wolf hysteria sweeping the Midwest.”

Rather than leaving power in the hands of legislators and commissioners, Pacelle is urging voters to speak up through ballot initiatives. “We need to make a statement that the public — and not just trophy hunters — has a right to have a say in the protection of wildlife.”

The referendum, by circumventing heavily lobbied legislators, sought to resonate with people who are disgusted with politics or who abhor cruelty to animals as sport. And, yes, often for food, but that's a subject for another day. In the meantime, we can safely say that nobody eats wolf. And nobody eats bear — twice.

Read more from Kathleen Parker's archive, follow her on Twitter or find her on Facebook.

A Small Organization Offers A Fresh Approach On Preventing Terrorism

By David Ignatius

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates

Hedayah certainly doesn't look like a global counterterrorism center. It sits in a quiet villa on Fatima bint Mubarak Street here. It has a staff of 14. Its annual budget wouldn't begin to cover the cost of an Apache helicopter gunship.

This tiny international organization, whose Arabic name means “guidance,” wants to be the softer face of the battle against such terror groups as the Islamic State. A brochure explains that if traditional counterterrorism efforts are perceived as soldiers with automatic weapons, Hedayah instead wants an image of kids sitting around a blackboard in a rural school.

Looking at the Middle East today, you'd have to say that the former approach, stressing soldiers with guns, hasn't been doing very well. Sectarian violence has devoured Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, and it's gnawing at surrounding nations.

So perhaps it's time to try the alternative approach of low-visibility groups such as Hedayah, whose 2014 budget was just \$6 million.

Hedayah was created in 2012 by the 29 countries in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which is chaired by the United States and Turkey. Member nations include many countries whose citizens have funded or exported radicalism, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The motivation was to share ideas, outside of existing intelligence and security partnerships, for "redirection of terrorist support and potential recruits through non-coercive preventive measures."

The organization doesn't even describe its mission as counterterrorism. Instead of "CT," its business is "CVE," which stands for "countering violent extremism." The nonsectarian approach extends to describing the office prayer room as the "all religion room."

Hedayah's non-coercive approach has unfortunately gotten more lip service than major support from participating nations. It holds meetings and seminars, but with so little money, its activities are limited. Maqsoud Kruse, the U.A.E. official who runs the group, says it has accomplished 15 percent of what it could do with more money and attention.

The Hedayah agenda stresses ways to avoid the radicalization process that leads people to embrace terrorism. The idea is prevention, rather than reaction. In the group's summary of last year's activities, the first item is "preventing education systems from becoming breeding grounds for violent extremism." In practical terms, this means stopping the use of madrassas and other religious schools as a training ground for jihadists.

Personally, I think there's a simple way to check the abuse of Islamic education. Saudi Arabia, whose funding for madrassas in such places as Afghanistan and Pakistan helped create a generation of potential religious warriors, must stop the practice. "No more foreign funding for madrassas" should be a demand of the nations that have joined the coalition against the Islamic State. Hedayah doesn't propose anything so radical, but it should.

A second priority for Hedayah is de-radicalization and rehabilitation of prisoners. "Prisons are potential terrorist networks," notes the group, because they have become places where radicals can recruit, indoctrinate and strategize.

Prisons have been especially important for the Islamic State, which freed thousands of well-indoctrinated inmates as it swept through Anbar and Mosul in Iraq. Here, Saudi Arabia provides a positive model: The kingdom has worked over the past decade to turn its al-Qaeda prisoners away from violence.

Two other preventive approaches are also noteworthy. Hedayah tries to encourage victims of terrorism to tell their stories, so that young people will hear a counternarrative to the heroic self-promotion of the jihadists. And it encourages community policing efforts around the world, so that local cops in New York City or Amsterdam or Riyadh will get tips from parents, friends or imams when young people become radicalized.

Hedayah's final goal involves using social media to combat extremism. This may be the most important mission, given the mastery that the Islamic State has shown in using the Internet to promote violent confrontation. Over the past decade, this virtual battle against extremism has typically been waged by secret intelligence and military agencies, or has been ignored. Neither approach makes sense.

One European nation is pioneering a program in which visits to jihadist sites prompt automated anti-radicalization messages. That sends a dual message: We're watching, and do the right thing.

Let's be honest: It's too late to stop the radicalization of Islamic State fighters. The battle to "degrade and ultimately destroy" those recruits, unfortunately, will now be waged with Apache gunships and drones. But maybe their younger brothers and cousins can be deterred from violent extremism by programs like the ones that Hedayah is promoting.

A Call To Action From 'Patient Zero' Monica Lewinsky

By Ruth Marcus

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Monica Lewinsky is trying to make lemonade out of 16-year-old lemons. Good for her, and good, ultimately, for us.

Not so good, of course, for Hillary Clinton's nascent presidential campaign, but not fatal either. Lewinsky's decision to reemerge as a public figure, this time committed to alleviating the scourge of cyberbullying, is awkward.

Still, it is inevitable, even without Lewinsky front and center, that Bill Clinton's deplorable conduct in office will come up as a topic during his wife's campaign, assuming she gets to the general election this time. The earlier it's talked about, the more old-newsy the whole mess will seem by the time Clinton's opponents try to make it relevant.

In the meantime, Lewinsky is making an important point about the role of the Internet and accompanying modern technology as an accelerant in the destruction of personal reputation and the associated harm caused by online exposure.

"Overnight, I went from being a completely private figure to a publicly humiliated one. I was Patient Zero," Lewinsky said in a speech Monday to Forbes's Under 30 Summit in Philadelphia. "The first person to have their reputation completely destroyed worldwide via the Internet."

Lewinsky's "Patient Zero" claim is more than a little overblown. Even without the medium of the Internet, without the Drudge Report to break the news on the Web or dial-up connections to let readers access the Starr report in all its detail, the story would have emerged, and it would have been huge.

Ask Donna Rice and Gary Hart. As Matt Bai has recently reminded us, Hart's presidential campaign was instantaneously destroyed and Rice's name became a household word, back when a mouse was a rodent and blog was a typo.

"Somehow, political and personal lives had collided overnight to create what was, in hindsight, the first modern political scandal, with all the attendant satellite trucks and saturation coverage and hourly turns in the narrative that Kafka himself could not have dreamed up," Bai writes in his book "All the Truth Is Out: The Week Politics Went Tabloid."

In truth, politics has always had its tabloid aspect. Grover Cleveland's critics chanted "Ma, Ma, where's my pa?" referring to an illegitimate child during the 1884 presidential campaign. And reputations have always been susceptible to overnight ruin.

But Lewinsky is also correct when she says that "the experience of shame and humiliation online is different than offline. There is no way to wrap your mind around where the humiliation ends — there are no borders."

She described how it felt "to watch yourself — or your name and likeness — be ripped apart online . . . For me, that was every day in 1998. There was a rotation of worsening name-calling and descriptions of me. I would go online, read in a paper or see on TV people referring to me as: tramp, slut, whore, tart,

bimbo, floozy, even spy. The New York Post's Page Six took to calling me, almost daily, the Portly Pepperpot. I was shattered."

This is where Lewinsky's effort can be most helpful. Few of us, thankfully, will be subjected to a Lewinsky-level public shaming. But many of us, and many of our children, will suffer the cyber slings and arrows of Internet-enabled humiliation and abuse.

Since Lewinsky's moment, the mechanisms for humiliation and the venues for abuse have multiplied. Imagine Linda Tripp with a webcam and smartphone. Imagine the episode in the age of Twitter and Facebook.

Lewinsky says she was moved to come forward by the experience of Rutgers freshman Tyler Clementi, who committed suicide after his roommate secretly taped and streamed video of Clementi kissing another man.

"Having survived myself, what I want to do now is help other victims of the shame game survive too," Lewinsky said. "What we need is a radical change in attitudes — on the Internet, mobile platforms and in the society of which they are a part."

Indeed, the response to Lewinsky's speech — and to her decision, either courageous or foolhardy, to join Twitter — only serves to underscore the ugliness she decries. "~~#~~HereWeGo," Lewinsky wrote in her maiden tweet, and so the Twitterverse did, in all its predictable coarseness.

If Lewinsky's solution to this "compassion deficit" feels unformed — well, she's not the only one who is struggling with how to re-civilize society. Simply going public may be Lewinsky's greatest service. A parent trying to comfort a teenager victimized by cyberbullies can point to Lewinsky and say: If she can survive, so can you.

Read more from Ruth Marcus's archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

Meet The One Democrat Who Is Not Running From Obama

By Dana Milbank

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

David Perdue took the cheap and easy route.

The Republican Senate candidate in Georgia, like Republican candidates in most other competitive races, calculated that the surest road to victory was to tie his opponent, in this case Democrat Michelle Nunn, to President Obama.

"The president himself said, 'make no mistake, these policies are on the ballot,'" Perdue said in a TV ad last week. As a photo of Obama with Nunn filled the screen, Perdue continued: "That's why he wants her in the Senate."

It was typical of Perdue's campaign strategy of trying to run against Obama. What was not typical was Nunn's response: She ran a spot of her own, featuring the same photo of herself with Obama.

"Have you seen this picture?" she asks viewers. "It's the one David Perdue has used to try and attack me in this campaign." As the image shifts to a photo of George H.W. Bush with his hand on her shoulder, Nunn goes on: "But what he doesn't tell you is that it was taken at an event honoring President Bush, who I worked for as CEO of his Points of Light Foundation. Throughout my career I've been able to work with Republicans and Democrats, and that's the same approach I'll bring to the U.S. Senate."

Nunn, daughter of the legendary Senate Democratic centrist Sam Nunn, may yet lose the race. But she is doing far better than expected in her run despite the hostile year and terrain for Democrats. A big reason for this: She's showing authenticity and courage at a time when both are in short supply among Democratic candidates.

Nunn's comfort in her own skin is in sharp contrast to other Democrats on the ballot, who are making awkward maneuvers to distance themselves from Obama and much of the Democratic Party.

In Kentucky, Democratic Senate candidate Alison Lundergan Grimes ran an ad declaring "I'm not Barack Obama." In Louisiana, an ad from Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu showed her saying "the administration's policies are simply wrong on oil and gas production."

Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska) boasted in an ad that he "took on Obama" on Arctic oil production and "voted against President Obama's trillion-dollar tax increase." (Actually, the vote was a Republican stunt.) Sen. Mark Pryor (D-Ark.) bragged of opposing gun restrictions Obama favored, proclaiming, "No one from New York or Washington tells me what to do."

And then there's Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) who skipped an Obama visit to his state and made the absurd claim that, at the White House, "the last person they want to see coming is me."

But running from Obama is dumb, both because it doesn't fool anybody and because it makes the candidate look shifty. Certainly, Obama is unpopular in the states that form this year's battlefield. But voters are savvy enough to know that Democratic lawmakers tend to support a Democratic president. And Obama seems to have a suicidal wish to remind Americans of this, telling liberal radio host Al Sharpton Monday that "these are all folks who vote with me."

The attempt to run from Obama only makes the runner look calculating at a time when voters are disgusted with anything that smells political. That helps to explain the Elizabeth Warren phenomenon. The Democratic senator from Massachusetts, a raging populist, is far more liberal than Obama. Yet she's in demand as a surrogate for Democrats even in places such as Kentucky and West Virginia.

As The Post's Paul Kane noted, she's campaigning for Senate candidates in Minnesota, Iowa and Colorado this week, and candidates are clearly not afraid to stand with her as she delivers her fist-pumping jeremiad against Republicans and wealthy interests.

Contrast that with Kentucky's Grimes, who had a promising start but has turned into a feckless candidate. She repeatedly refused to say whether she even voted for Obama, actually claiming during a debate last week that she wouldn't "compromise a constitutional right" by revealing this secret.

The day after that preposterous dodge, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee said it was stopping advertising in Kentucky — essentially an acknowledgment that Grimes would lose — and was buying advertising time in support of Nunn in Georgia.

Republicans tried to play the same game with Nunn, but she didn't make Grimes's mistake. "I did vote for the president," she told The Post's Ed O'Keefe.

Of course she did. She's a Democrat, and she's not going to insult voters' intelligence by pretending otherwise. If that causes her to lose in Georgia, she at least will have kept her dignity.

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WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Racial Parity Will Transform Delaware By 2060

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Northernmost Delaware's racial and ethnic mix now appears headed toward parity by the year 2060 with the diversity now found in Philadelphia or the Dallas and Houston areas, new population projections show.

The change would be part of a projected century-long trend that already has made it more likely than not that any random encounter in Kent or New Castle counties, or in the state as a whole, will involve a person of a different racial or ethnic group.

USA Today commissioned a nationwide demographic analysis to produce similar assessments for every county in the nation, using a 0-to-100 Diversity Index scale that reflects the random chance of meeting someone different. By 2060, forecasters concluded, nationwide odds of bumping into someone of the same race or ethnicity will be less than 1 in 3.

Even rural areas that as recently as 1960 were virtually all white are changing dramatically. Relatively rural spots like Cecil and Dorchester counties in Maryland or Cumberland County, N.J., along Delaware Bay are now expected to have populations even more diverse than New Castle County's 50 year's hence.

In nearby Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the chances of encountering a non-white resident were only 3 percent in 1960. Now the odds are nearly 30 percent, and by 2060 will move to just better than even, though still trailing the country.

"You can see the direction that things are heading," said Edward C. Ratledge, a University Delaware professor and director of the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research. "It's the same thing throughout the country. It's a more diverse population than ever. The question is: What does it say about the point when the minorities are a majority."

According to the projections, Delaware will rank as the 15th most-diverse state in the country by 2060, with New Castle County's racial and ethnic mix rising to the top 6 percent of counties nationwide. In contrast, Sussex County – once the state's most racially mixed – began trailing in diversity in the 1980s and 1990s as largely white resort-area and retirement populations swelled; it is expected to still have a 64 percent white population in 2060.

Forecasts for the rest of the Delmarva Peninsula are similar, if less extreme. They quickly lead to questions about how the population will blend, or not blend, below the broad-brush county-level statistics, and how areas and neighborhoods will look in a state where racial and ethnic segregation is a fact of life.

Kent and New Castle counties are among the 11 percent of counties nationwide where the Diversity Index already has crossed the 50 percent threshold. By 2060, both will be among the 13.8 percent of counties with a 67 percent or greater "hyperdiversity."

Wicomico and Worcester counties in Maryland, where Salisbury and Ocean City lie, respectively, will cross that same hyperdiversity line between 2050 and 2060.

No group will increase faster than Hispanic residents, expected to account for about 16 percent of New Castle and Sussex County's population by 2060, twice the present share. And no group will decline more rapidly than non-Hispanic white residents, already in the minority in some areas, including Colonial School District.

Poll: How do you think Delaware will adjust to growing diversity in th...

Among the more-prominent forecasts:

- The state's overall white population will drop from 71 percent in 2010 to 59 percent in 2060, with non-Hispanic whites expected to become a minority.
- The number of Hispanic residents in Delaware will be more than 2.6 times higher than today, growing from nearly 8 percent currently to 15 percent, with the more-than 193,000 statewide Hispanic total in 2060 exceeding the entire 2010 population of either Sussex County or Kent County.
- About 6.6 times more residents will identify themselves as being of two or more races.

- Although the number of black residents will increase by nearly 53 percent, their share of the statewide population will move only from 22 to 24 percent.

- The number of residents identifying themselves as Asian or American Indian will increase, but not as fast as other racial and ethnic groups. The state's Asian population will decline as a percentage of the total from 3.2 percent in 2010 to 2.8 percent in 2060.

American Indian residents, led by Delaware's Nanticoke Indian tribe members, and Pacific Islanders remain at only a fraction of a percent of the population.

Sussex County, more diverse than the rest of the state in 1960, lost ground by 1990 as the pace of Baby Boomer retirements and better off white residents moved in. Although the poultry industry's expansion fed a huge growth in laborers through immigration, especially from Guatemala, overall diversity in Sussex is not expected to cross the 50 percent mark before 2030.

But already densely-populated New Castle County will grow far more slowly than the rest of the state, with increases in other groups coming at the expense of those identifying themselves solely as white.

By 2060, the "White Only" population of New Castle County will be 9 percent lower than today – the only group expected to decline in absolute numbers in Delaware.

The total for black residents will increase significantly in absolute numbers, but that group's share of the total will grow more slowly than the multi-racial and Hispanic groups.

"There are questions about what the impacts of increased diversity are going to be in pretty much every major institution," said Barrett A. Lee, who directs the sociology department and Population Research Institute at Penn State University. "What are the consequences for local economies, politics, health care? How are increases in diversity going to affect things like civic engagement, or relations among racial or ethnic groups?"

Rural Kent County resident and small business owner Deborah J. Torrijos heartily agrees with predictions that Hispanic residents will increase their share of Delaware's population over the next 50 years, but considers the estimates low.

"Too conservative," says Torrijos, a legal and health care interpreter. "I believe that the numbers now are inaccurate, and that there actually are more Hispanics here than the Census counted."

"I think acceptance in the general population has grown," Torrijos added. "There are always people who are reluctant to accept different cultures or languages. It depends on what circles that day you're running in. To be honest, I still encounter some bigotry or insensitivity of culture from people who say 'You should speak English.'"

Delaware's Indo-Asian population, concentrated in northern Delaware, began to grow in the early 1970s as student enrollments from that country increased at the University of Delaware.

"The number of people from southern Asia has really grown in the last 8 to 10 years, and the community support has gotten better," said Gopal Bhagia, a leading member of the Indo-American Association of Delaware. "We're recognized now within the local communities that we work with. That recognition has increased tremendously."

The Census Bureau uses "Asian" as an umbrella term to take in those with heritages ranging from Pakistan and India to China, the Philippines, Japan and Malaysia. Likewise for the less-obvious factors that seem to prop up the white population, a category that includes citizens of Middle Eastern and North African descent.

In practice, Indian-Americans and Indian immigrants accounted for about 41 percent, or 12,000, of the state's roughly 30,000-member Asian population on average between 2008 and 2012 according to the Census Bureau. Those from China represented about 11 percent, Filipino another 7 percent.

Delaware lies in the heart of the region that is becoming "increasingly multi-hued, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic," according to a study on nationwide trends led by Penn State's Barrett Lee and released in late 2012.

"The most diverse communities in the U.S. are disproportionately western, southern, and coastal metropolitan areas and their principal cities and suburbs," the report noted. It added that the trend is both pervasive and a regular source of "debate, if not rancor."

Lee said separately: "We don't know if there will be a lot of unresolved issues. We don't have a crystal ball to figure out if increased diversity is going to lead to more conflict and competition for resources."

While immigration already is a frequently mentioned issue, Lee added, much more is at work.

"Many people think it's all about immigration. But even if there was some reason, or if we could magically turn off the immigration faucet today, the population would still become more and more diverse over time," Lee said, "partly because much of the increasing diversity is due to natural increases within those groups."

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Odor-plagued Compost Plant Ordered To Shut Down

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

State environmental regulators have ordered the shutdown of an industrial scale composting plant near the Port of Wilmington that critics say produced a years-long siege of foul odors affecting tens of thousands.

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary David Small said he would decline to re-issue a needed five-year "beneficial use" recycling determination for Peninsula Compost LLC's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center along Christiana Avenue.

As of Tuesday, the company was prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

"It's disappointing, but it was clear that the facility was causing an undue burden on the communities in close proximity to the facility, the city of Wilmington and parts of New Castle County," Small said.

"The inability to maintain compliance by this facility and the implications, most specifically the odor impacts to the community, had just gotten to a point where it was no longer acceptable," Small said.

Rep. James Johnson, D-New Castle, said that Small called him shortly after noon to tell him of the decision.

"The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years," Johnson said. "It's a relief to have a good answer."

Peninsula's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center opened the \$20 million facility in late 2009, aiming to convert up to 160,000 tons yearly of spoiled, discarded and outdated food and other castoffs into marketable compost. The company intended to use a rapid, under-cover composting method and tight process and raw material controls.

That intent was soon knocked off track by unwanted materials in the center's supply streams, operating troubles and a weak economy, among other factors. At one point, backlogged piles of compost caught fire and sent cloying smoke across the Port of Wilmington, briefly shutting it down.

Complaints about the plant's distinctive odor surfaced in nearby disadvantaged neighborhoods, and eventually spread across the city, north to Brandywine Hundred and even across the Delaware River, to Pennsville, New Jersey.

As recently as Monday, regional developer Robert Buccini, with Buccini Pollin Group said the stench "hurts economic growth throughout the city." BPG's headquarters stands northwest of the plant site, in the path of odors.

Hours before Johnson's report, northeast Wilmington resident Brenda Watson said she was "hoping and praying" that the trouble ends.

"The smell is too much," Watson said. "In the summertime, you want to save on the expense of the air conditioner in the evening so you put in a window fan, but the smell is so bad you have to shut everything all the time."

"It's unbelievable," Watson added. "I took a bus trip to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a few weeks ago, and as soon as we got to 12th Street coming back, I knew where we were because of the smell."

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Delaware Businesses Stockpile Road Salt

By Melissa Nann Burke

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 20, 2014

Unlike some agencies, DelDOT did not run out of road salt last winter, but turned down requests to share its salt stockpile.

After exhausting their supplies of road salt last winter – or coming close – businesses and cities in the region are stockpiling extra in case of another super snowy season.

The Port of Wilmington will import roughly 350,000 metric tons of salt before year's end, and is on pace to handle 800,000 to a million tons of salt this year to meet demands Delaware, South Jersey and the five-county Philadelphia region, said Jeff Koetitz, director of operations for Port Contractors Inc., a materials- and cargo-handling firm.

That's compared to 250,000 tons that passed through the port in 2013. Much of the salt is road-grade, but not all. It comes from Mexico, Egypt, Chile, Spain, the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

"Everyone's all hyped up," Koetitz said. "Let's just hope it snows."

Workers at the port last week were unloading a portion of a 40,000-ton shipment from Chile when U.S. Sen. Chris Coons and Delaware Economic Development Director Alan Levin toured the vessel with port officials.

The bulk of the salt was transferred to dump trucks and hauled to Oceanport LLC, a rock salt company in Claymont, for storage, Koetitz said.

"How long can you store salt?" Coons asked.

"A long time – years," replied Michael Evanko, president of Port Contractors. "It does get hard. Sometimes, we have to break it up and crush it."

Chemical Equipment Labs, a salt provider in Marcus Hook, tries to keep about 200,000 tons of salt on hand at most times to supply its customers, which range from apartment buildings to office complexes to landscapers, CEO Edward Morgan said. This year, the company expects to order an additional 500,000 tons during the season, he said.

"The longest we kept several piles was when there was no snow for about three years. That was brutal," Morgan told Coons. "We sold everything we had last year."

Snowfall totals last winter made the record books in many areas, blowing through cities' snow-removal budgets and causing salt shortages when demand exceeded locally available supplies.

The supply chain choked when municipalities around the country tried to simultaneously replenish dwindling stockpiles after successive snow and ice storms. Shipments from salt flats in places such as Chile can take two to three weeks. In some places, ice-clogged rivers blocked the passage of barge traffic.

"In times like last year, they just can't get it in quick enough. There's logistics issues," Morgan said.

The Delaware Department of Transportation benefits from proximity to the Port of Wilmington, when compared with inland DOTs and road-salt customers, officials said.

"Last winter, many states had problems moving the salt to where they needed it," said Jim Westhoff, a DelDOT spokesman.

DelDOT did not run out of road salt, but turned down requests to share its stockpile, worrying about getting too low.

The agency currently has more than 43,150 tons of salt stockpiled, and doesn't have the capacity to store much more. DelDOT is responsible for treating 89 percent of Delaware roadways, and typically uses 13,000 tons of salt during severe storms.

"We have no plans for any considerable increase in the amount of salt we stockpile," Westhoff said. "However, we are working on adding some additional storage capacity in Sussex County, to reduce our travel time if we have an event in Sussex, and need a great deal of road salt there."

Crews at maintenance yards in the three counties are preparing for snow equipment inspections, which begin this week, said Brian Urbanek, assistant director of support services for DelDOT.

Mechanics will be checking the hydraulic lines, headlights, horns and salt spreaders among the elements of 333 snow plows.

Last week, the agency offered equipment operators a chance to brush up on their snow-plowing skills in a computer simulator set up in Dover. More than 120 DelDOT employees participated, in addition to dozens of operators from towns and counties around the state.

With three large displays representing the windshield and windows, the simulator program runs the driver through different storm scenarios. The streetscape varies from urban to rural. Drivers must react quickly to successfully navigate obstacles from poor visibility, to slippery roadways, to darting pedestrians and deer.

"There's lots of things going on out there when we're pushing snow. Cars don't put their turn signals on, or they pull out in front of you. People don't realize this truck doesn't stop on a dime," said Gary Licsko, who plows a route in the Seaford area.

"This is a good training exercise, especially for new operators. But nothing is going to get exactly like the real thing."

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Del. Treasurer Race Gets Personal

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Drew Wilson, Barney's campaign manager, made the comments by email after Barney's campaign accused Simpler of continuing to "attack and demean" the Democrat's military experience at a Millsboro candidate forum hosted by the American Legion last week.

Simpler's campaign manager, Jim Gibbons, criticized Barney for "mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler," saying "we are proud of the campaign we've run."

The latest back-and-forth could be evidence of concern among Democrats. Internal polling shows Simpler leading Barney about two weeks before Delawareans vote on Nov. 4, according to Democratic and Republican sources.

Privately, Democrats express concern that Barney could lose despite a 125,000 Democratic voter registration advantage statewide.

Simpler is a former investment fund manager and chief financial officer of his family's Rehoboth-based hotel management business who has focused his campaign for state treasurer on his money management experience.

Barney is a former policy aide to Gov. Jack Markell and U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, and a former Marine who served and was severely wounded in Iraq. The Democrat has called attention to his military background, saying it is evidence of his commitment to public service.

Simpler's campaign has not targeted Barney's military service as an issue. At the Millsboro forum last Wednesday, in fact, Simpler praised Barney for serving.

But the Republican did invoke Barney's military background while criticizing Barney for going negative. Simpler made the comments during the closing moments of a debate held on Sept. 11 at the Siegel Jewish Community Center in Talleyville.

"H

e has gone around saying that he wants to be treated like a hero. He should start acting like one and stop listening to his political handlers who are giving him terrible advice about how to prosecute a campaign," Simpler said while reacting to a campaign attack from Barney that misrepresented his position on Medicare.

"

We do not need....another Democrat who is a political opportunist looking for a platform," Simpler added. "We want someone who wants to do this job with the highest degree of professionalism."

In recent days, Barney criticized Simpler for comments in Millsboro that he says inappropriately equated Simpler's skills as a finance manager with the "specialized skills" used by doctors to save Barney's life after he was severely wounded by a gunshot in 2006 in Iraq.

"I want to honor the veterans here who have given us service and I want to honor my opponent as well. And I note that he said something very important, that he wouldn't be here with us today but for people who had highly specialized training," Simpler said, according to an unofficial transcript.

"Training matters. Special skills matter. For the last four years we had Treasury managed by someone who has an excellent academic resume and who has a successful law practice, but he has absolutely no financial background."

Wilson, Barney's campaign manager, said Simpler's comments are evidence of a "

serious character flaw. He can't recognize the difference between a life devoted to secretly managing money for millionaires and the 11+ years of training that go into saving lives under fire by becoming a military surgeon."

Gibbons, Simpler's campaign manager, said Barney's attacks are evidence that the Democrat is not connecting with voters.

"Sean Barney has had months to make his case to voters, and has simply failed to do so. Voters know that Sean has no finance experience," Gibbons said. "As a result, he is now desperate and can resort only to mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler. Delawareans don't want that kind of politics and we are not going there."

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Top 9 Projects That Need Funding

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation in August that parks officials hope will help chip away at a \$100 million capital projects backlog that has built up in state parks.

The new law allows state officials to invest parks and open space money more aggressively, using a new endowment to fund outdoor development and stewardship.

Here are the top nine projects that need funding, according to parks officials. Some cost estimates, including the cost for renovations at the popular Killens Pond waterpark, represent only the first phase of larger projects.

Not all of these projects will find funding under the new plan signed by Markell, but here's the wish list:

1. Cape Henlopen State Park: Sewer system upgrades: \$2 million

Necessary relining work on Cape Henlopen's sewer system is the parks system's number-one priority.

2. Killens Pond State Park: Waterpark renovations, \$2.8 million

Lawmakers and parks officials have pointed to the need to renovate the main pool, install new slides, add spray facilities, improve bathroom facilities and more. The cost here represents phase one of \$12 million in planned upgrades.

3. Fort Delaware State Park: Tram path repairs, \$100,000

The path is eroding on the sides into the marsh and presenting a hazard in accessing the fort, especially at night, parks officials say.

4. Auburn Heights Preserve: Retrofit sprinkler system, \$75,000

The sprinkler and freeze proof systems protect a collection of antique cars housed in the museum in Yorklyn. The current system is having clogging issues.

5. Bellevue State Park: Demolition of indoor tennis center, \$1.6 million

The cost of this project increased two-fold because of large amounts of asbestos found inside and concerns about protecting a historic school house that is attached. The state is also worried about trespassers in this high-traffic area of a busy park.

6. Brandywine Creek State Park: Rocky Run Bridge, \$600,000-\$800,000

The bridge on one of the state's most popular hiking trails was washed out during a series of storms. Completion of this project is expected in early 2015. A temporary structure will be installed in two weeks.

7. Wilmington State Parks: Overhaul of H. Fletcher Brown Park, \$1.5 million

State officials are working with the Rotary on a renovations plan that will include accessibility upgrades, gathering areas, preservation of historic monuments and a greening of the landscape. They are also seeking federal funding.

8. Fort DuPont State Park: Shop upgrades, \$60,000

The park's shop, critical to the maintenance of Fort DuPont, Fort Delaware, Grassdale and Port Penn sites, has no running water and is prone to flooding. The projects will likely exceed these initial cost estimates.

9. Lums Pond State Park: Campground utility upgrades, \$4.7 million

The state wants to add electricity to camping sites, to allow campers to charge phones, speakers, lights and other accessories requiring power. They are also looking at adding sewer for some campsites, exploring sewer treatment plant improvement, and considering adding cabins to the park. Some parts of this plan could move forward without full funding.

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Rodel Report Pushes Personalized Learning

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Some Delaware teachers are working on classrooms of the future, but the state needs to make some big changes before every student can learn in one.

These are the main conclusions of a blueprint released Tuesday by the Rodel Teacher Council, a group of educators from all three counties assembled by the Rodel Foundation of Delaware, a think-tank dedicated to improving the state's education system.

The report offers suggestions for how to personalize learning for students using technology and alternative models for schools and classrooms.

Take council member Jennifer Hollstein's English class at the Charter School of Wilmington.

Students work on research papers, using online resources such as UDLive or TED Talks on their computers. Hollstein monitors their progress on her laptop, approving timelines and research notes.

"Not only are they no longer limited by their library, they're not limited by a classroom structure that tells them how to do everything," Hollstein said.

If Delaware can get to the point where every classroom looks more like Hollstein's, the state could move away from a traditional grade-level model to a "competency-based" approach, where students advance once they've mastered concepts, the report suggests.

The goal is to create an educational system in which every student learns at their own pace, so that advanced students can more easily work through high school material and start earning college credits while less-advanced students aren't left struggling with a concept just because lesson plans have moved on, the report says.

"We really want to reach the kids who feel disenfranchised by school," said Michelle Johnson, a gifted and talented teacher at Towne Point Elementary School in Dover.

But if this idea is going to gain any traction, there will need to be big changes, the report says.

To make personalized learning widespread, states and districts would need to change the structure for earning course credits away from grade levels towards mastery of ideas. Schools would need more

flexibility in “seat time” rules, so that students can spend time on the subjects they need the most help with, not the ones that happen to fall in a certain grade.

Teachers also would need to be trained in the new system, both in new technological tools and a new style of managing classrooms.

“If you go into a classroom that’s doing this right, it can look a little chaotic, because everybody’s working on their own,” Hollstein said. “It’s a different way of thinking about the classroom.”

Though it’s unlikely all these changes will happen immediately, some districts are working together to try to find ways to make personalized learning work.

The BRINC consortium, a coalition of the Brandywine, Indian River, Colonial and New Castle County Vo-Tech districts, has been investing time and money into helping teachers and information technology staffs

“We know the state is looking at this and we all know this is coming in the future,” said council member Robyn Howton, an English teacher at Mt. Pleasant High School. “We want to keep pushing this as an issue that needs to be talked about.”

Contact Matthew Albright at malbright@delawareonline.com or at 324-2428. Follow him on Twitter @TNJ_malbright.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wj3tJo>

Time For Some Reasons To Feel #delaproud

By Jeffrey Gentry

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

It’s been a few weeks since we discussed feeling #delaproud about anything, so I thought we could do that today.

First, let’s go ahead and scratch Hunter **Biden** off the list for this discussion. That little failed drug test for the Navy was a real dumb move on his part.

This might be a shocker, but I’m #delaproud of Wilmington Mayor Dennis P. Williams and his decision to form a homicide unit. Is it going to make a difference or is it just a renaming of a group of people who will do what they were doing before? Who knows. But it was good to see something the community felt would make a difference come to fruition.

How about being #delaproud of the hundreds of Newark High School students who DID NOT get involved in multiple brawls at the school on Monday. We’ve heard about the dozen or so arrests. I’m #delaproud of those of you who stayed out of it.

Definitely feeling #delaproud of Nasai Oliver, the 12-year-old Cab Calloway student who opened a lemonade stand at the corner of Jessup Street and Vandever Avenue in Wilmington. Originally done to raise money for a pair of Nike Air Jordan sneakers, Oliver kept the stand open and earned enough for the shoes, his back-to-school wardrobe and plans to give a portion to charity. Oliver’s positive attitude has quickly become an example for others.

How about being #delaproud of the hard-working scientists at the DuPont Co.’s Experimental Station going back to the 1950s. Their work has contributed to what has become a key weapon in the Ebola fight – personal protection apparel.

Feeling #delaproud about the state’s farmers. The recent tragic accident in Middletown served as a horrible reminder of how dangerous the occupation remains today.

Newark’s Ronaldo Tello Marzol deserves a #delaproud shoutout. The editor general of Delaware Hispano, a Spanish-language magazine he started here, won the Trailblazer Businessperson of the Year

award at the recent Hispanic Choice Awards in Philadelphia, honoring businesspeople and community leaders in the region.

And finally, I'm #delaproud of all 20 teachers chosen as finalists to be Delaware's next State Teacher of the Year, especially Megan Szabo, a 7th and 8th grade science teacher at Postlethwait Middle School. Szabo was named State Teacher of the Year Tuesday night.

Have some #delaproud things you'd like to share? Send them my way by email or drop by my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/jeffreygentryTNJMG and let me know. I may share yours in a future column.

Share in the Only in Delaware conversation 24/7 on [delawareonline](http://delawareonline.com). Contact Jeffrey Gentry at jgentry@delawareonline.com. Follow him on Twitter: @jeffreygentry

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wjaV7s>

WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS

What Delawareans Need To Know About Ebola

By Karyl Rattay

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Dear Delawarean,

Because of the diagnosis of individuals in Dallas with Ebola virus and the subsequent intense media coverage, I know people are concerned. As Delaware's State Health Officer, I want to help Delawareans separate the facts from fiction and to know what is being done in Delaware in the event that we have the Ebola virus in our state. And I want people to know where to turn if they have concerns or questions.

The tragic epidemic of the Ebola virus infection in West Africa continues to unfold. Particularly affected are the countries of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Recently, the Ebola virus was transmitted to two nurses from an ill Liberian man in Dallas, Texas. The man subsequently passed away, and the nurses are still hospitalized. The two women contracted the illness due to a combination of direct contact with a severely ill individual and a presumed break in hospital personal protection measures.

None of the community contacts of the man who passed away in Dallas became ill, including his family and friends. The other health care workers who treated him are still under observation and will remain so until the 21-day incubation period passes.

Based on currently available information, Ebola virus is only transmitted by patients who have symptoms, and the risk of getting the disease through normal, everyday contact is very low. The people being monitored by health officials in other states who came into brief contact with the three ill people in Texas or on an airplane, are being monitored as an extra precaution, not because there is a high risk of a genuine large spread of the illness. And, the close family and friends of the man who passed away in Texas were just released from monitoring as the incubation period has passed and no one became ill.

As you move through your day, remember this virus, and many other viruses, can be killed through careful hand-washing and alcohol-based sanitizers.

To become ill with Ebola, a person must come into direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of an infected individual. Ebola symptoms occur after an incubation period of two to 21 days and include:

- Fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius)
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain

- Unexplained bleeding or bruising
- Muscle pain

The Delaware Division of Public Health has been actively preparing for a potential Ebola illness in Delaware. While the risk is low for Delaware, it is important to be prepared for any situation. DPH has been working with medical providers, hospitals, some employers, EMS and other partners to ensure they are ready. DPH is particularly focused on ensuring medical partners can immediately recognize a potential case and handle the patient appropriately.

All Delaware hospitals have confirmed the ability to manage Ebola patients. That means they have put in place plans to isolate patients with Ebola, and are training on practices to protect health care workers. If a case is confirmed in Delaware, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention special team will immediately be placed on the ground to help DPH trace any potential contacts whom may also need to be isolated and help to determine if the ill patient should be moved out of state for treatment.

I know Delawareans have questions about what they should do if they suspect a person they encounter might be infected with Ebola virus. First, it is important we don't make assumptions that someone might be infected based on their accent, background or skin color, and it is important to remember how hard the disease is to get.

If you or a loved one start to show symptoms you find concerning, call your health care provider. Flu season has started in Delaware. Flu and several travel-related illnesses including malaria, typhoid fever and dengue, are much more common than Ebola. The symptoms of all these diseases are very similar.

If you wish to discuss a suspected case, you may contact DPH at (888) 295-5156 Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or (302) 744-4700 after 4:30 p.m., weekends and holidays. If you have general questions, the CDC has a 24/7 line available for general questions on the Ebola virus and can be reached by calling (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

I hope I have helped to address concerns you may have. The attached fact sheet is provided for more information. Visit dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/index.html for additional information.

Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, is the director of Delaware's Public Health Department of Health and Social Services.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wiybCB>

An End To The Stench Could Finally Mean Fresh Air

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Finally, residents living within smelling range of an industrial-scale composting plant got some long overdue sweet news about their neighborhood's atmosphere Tuesday. It will soon be over.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, prodded by the evidence of the stink pollution and political leaders' advocacy on behalf of frustrated residents, has ordered the doors of the site closed.

The company is now prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

How bad was it? Real bad, and for the last seven years. The odor did not just hover over the nearby homes and businesses. It traveled beyond the lower-income neighborhoods that bordered the site into downtown Wilmington and across the river to Pennsville, New Jersey.

How bad was it? At one time, backlogged piles of compost caught fire, with smoking foul odor shutting down the entire Port of Wilmington.

Complaints have been consistent since soon after the plant began operating on a full schedule in 2009. The \$20 million site can convert up to 160,000 tons of spoiled, outdated food into what's described as "marketable compost."

However, not even closing their doors and sealing their windows shut kept out the odor that settled in the atmosphere of the nearby residents' homes. This was stagnant air pollution, made worse by the fact that Peninsula ran into unwanted materials and debris in the plant's supply streams. A problem likely not of their fault, but one they had difficulty in resolving.

And yet the site kept its permit. It kept functioning and assaulting the neighborhoods with foul odor. Then word came of the closing.

On Monday, a recent New Jersey transplant to the area sent this note to The News Journal Editorial Board.

"If you are looking for a great story...cover the unbearable stench that is always lingering on the Southbridge side from the dumping of what I believe is waste and chemicals. Of course! It is located on the highly populated side of blacks and Latino communities. Frustrating. ... gagging smell. The company's rather pay the fine every time and not rectify the issue and shut it down!

"Wonder why it's a high cancer rate in Delaware? I feel like Erin Brockovich. You have to smell it for yourself to feel my disbelief and frustration."

No, we don't. Finally, DNREC ordered the needed shutdown, based on overwhelming evidence. Now those residents and workers in south Wilmington have the long-sought-after relief they deserve.

State Rep. James Johnson, who represents the area, said of the decision: "The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years. It's a relief to have a good answer."

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1tJuPuu>

VICE PRESIDENTIAL *NEWS CLIPS*

PRODUCED FOR THE OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

TO: THE VICE PRESIDENT AND STAFF
DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2014 -- 6:15 AM EDT

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BIDEN IN THE NEWS

Experts Discuss Technology's Role In Future Of Transportation

By Ashley Halsey

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Ask a transportation expert what America needs right now and you'll get a fairly simple answer: better roads and bridges, enhanced public transit and improved rail lines, ports and airports. Ask a transportation expert how Americans will get from place to place in 20 years, and often the answer is a lot less certain.

If that seems like a disconnect — surely what we need today will be in use for a couple of decades — there is a one-word explanation for the quiver in experts' voices when they talk about transportation's future:

Technology.

It has revolutionized transportation just as it has forever changed most other aspects of life, and in the years to come it promises to take transportation to a dozen forks in the road.

That was one aspect made clear at a wide-ranging conference of transportation experts brought together in downtown Washington on Tuesday by The Washington Post.

The conference attendees heard from mayors, past and present U.S. secretaries of transportation, Vice President **Biden** and a bevy of fellow experts, most with their own vision of the future.

The central theme for most was the critical importance of investing in the nation's tattered infrastructure to keep the United States competitive in the global market. Finding the funding to do that as revenue from the traditional gas tax dwindles was a subset of that conversation, with several suggesting a move to a mileage-based fee or tolling on interstate highways.

When it comes to a vision for the future that lies just over the horizon, there were many ideas tossed out that made certainty a bit elusive.

Technology has spread so rapidly through virtually all modes of transportation that the challenge is in determining how it will continue to transform the future. At few times in history has the pace of change come so quickly.

Questions that arose — without firm answers — from the presentations Tuesday included:

- If autonomous vehicles — driverless cars — are just over the horizon, will drivers who no longer drive still need insurance? Or will vehicles and their manufacturers be covered by product-liability policies?

- Will highways of the future need things such as road signs or guardrails, since the cars know where they are going and will stay between the white lines?

- If electric cars are a major part of the future — Tesla was represented at the conference — will there still be a need for a gas station every few blocks?

- With autonomous cars able to toddle off and park themselves, will there be a need for vast acres of underground parking garages in downtown areas such as the District's where land is at a premium?

- When the last parking meters wear out and disappear, and cars begin to park themselves and pay for the space electronically, will parking tickets become a thing of the past? And what will replace the ticket revenue that cities have come to count on?

- Will public transit be less popular when autonomous cars can deliver their passengers that "last mile" from the transit stop to the front door?

- Will magnetic levitation trains running through tunnels deep underground carry passengers at 300 mph?

- And will cars fly?

A prototype of a flying car sat on 14th Street NW outside the conference.

“Hopefully we can use these technologies we’ve talked about here at the conference and change some things,” said flying-car developer Carl Dietrich, head of Terrafugia, whose Web site says that it “intends to lead the creation of a new flying car industry.”

In an allusion to the prospect that packages may be delivered to homes by unmanned drones, Dietrich asked: “How many years will it take of seeing your packages flying above you before we say, ‘Hey, we could be up there?’ “

More Prefer Public Transit To Road Building

By Ryan Struyk

[ABC News](#), October 22, 2014

Americans in an ABC News/Washington Post poll favor expanded public transportation options over road building in government efforts to reduce traffic congestion. But where they live makes a difference.

Overall, 54 percent prefer focusing on public transit, such as trains and buses, while four in ten say the government should focus on expanding and building roads instead. Preference for public transit, though, ranges from 61 percent of urban residents to 52 percent of suburbanites and 49 percent of people in rural areas.

See PDF with full results here.

The results come as Vice President Joe **Biden** and six mayors from major U.S. cities are scheduled to attend a Washington Post forum today on relieving traffic congestion.

There are other differences among groups. Preference for a focus on public transit peaks at two in three liberals and six in ten college graduates, as well as among nonwhites, people under age 40, those in the top income category, \$100,000-plus, and political independents.

Other groups have a slight preference for road building: strong conservatives, evangelical white Protestants and white men without a college degree.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Sept. 4-7, 2014, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell phone-only respondents. Results have a 3.5 point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York.

Joe Biden Reveals His ‘Biggest Regret’

By T. Becket Adams

[Washington Examiner](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** said Tuesday that he regrets that several states with Republican governors rejected the billions of taxpayer dollars set aside by the economic stimulus bill of 2009 for high-speed rail and that most of the money went to California.

“My biggest regret was I got the president to put billions of dollars into the Recovery Act for high-speed rail,” **Biden** said during a speech addressing transportation and infrastructure spending.

Gov. Rick Scott, R-Fla., “turned ... back” the funds, the vice president added. “He now wants it back, but he turned it back.”

Gov. John Kasich, R-Ohio, also “turned it back.”

But Gov. Jerry Brown, D-Calif.?

“He took it all,” **Biden** said, prompting laughter from his audience.

“And guess what?” the vice president added during his speech at an event hosted by the Washington Post. “Watch what’s going to happen in the next four years you’re going to see a high-speed rail system going directly from [Los Angeles] to Las Vegas, carrying hundreds of thousands of passengers.”

The future of the high-speed rail project linking Vegas to L.A. remains in doubt.

Biden Closes His Amtrak Hours

By Micah Reynolds

[North Fork \(NY\) Vue](#), October 22, 2014

During a speech on commuter issues, Vice President **Biden** estimates that he has made roughly 8,000 round-trips on Amtrak.

“**Biden** closes his Amtrak hours” is categorized as “us”.

Vice President Touts New Detroit Buses, M-1

By David Shepardson

[Detroit News](#), October 21, 2014

Washington — Vice President Joe **Biden** touted Detroit’s M-1 rail system and the Transportation Department’s award of funds for 50 new buses for the Motor City.

“Detroit’s getting off its back. It’s on its knees. It’s about to stand up,” **Biden** said at a forum on commuting sponsored by the Washington Post at a local theater. He praised Detroit Mayor Mike Duggan as a “great mayor. ... I’m serious — a really can-do guy.”

Biden also suggested self-driving cars may be in place faster than many experts have predicted.

Last month, the U.S. Transportation Department announced it was awarding the city \$25.9 million to buy as many as 50 new hybrid and clean diesel buses that will ease overcrowding, reduce wait times, and provide more accessible and reliable service where 35 percent of the people live below the poverty line. They will replace aging vehicles that have been “plagued by maintenance issues, resulting in better on-time service, as well as reduced carbon emissions,” the department said.

It marked the second boost from Washington in less than a year for the city’s beleaguered bus system. In December, the Federal Transit Administration approved \$41.6 million to overhaul 60 buses, improve facilities and acquire security equipment.

The Transportation Department said 60 percent of Detroiters don’t have access to a car. “They rely on buses,” **Biden** said. “They don’t have enough buses so we just arranged for” funding for more buses.

“What does mean? It means people can keep the few jobs they have out there. They don’t show up late. They are actually able to be on time. ... It means a working mom doesn’t have to take two buses that take two hours to get to work.”

He also praised the M-1 rail system “going right through the center of town.”

“The point is that it matters. Transportation and convenient transportation, efficient transportation matter to how people can live their lives,” **Biden** said.

Biden also praised Google Inc. for working on self-driving cars and Tesla Motors Inc. for building electric vehicles.

“Tesla — I shouldn’t say Tesla because I’m going to be accused of promoting a brand. But here’s the deal: They are about to put a car on the market that goes 0 to 60 in 3.2 seconds,” **Biden** said referring a new souped-up version of the Model S that the automaker unveiled earlier this month.

“Google’s working to develop self-driving cars, which I predict will be around in the next four or five years. The possibilities are immense.”

Self-driving cars could save lives and improve productivity, **Biden** said. “It’s gigantic,” he said.

Duggan won permission in January from Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr to hire a new bus director, after he saw buses running behind schedule while residents waited in subzero temperatures. Duggan had been pushing the Obama administration for bus funding and spoke with **Biden** about it.

Also last month, the Transportation Department awarded a \$12.2 million federal grant to help finish the 3.31-mile M-1 streetcar project.

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Vice President Joe Biden Visit Tied To Int’l Recognition Of The “The Duluth Model”

By Kevin Jacobsen

[KBJR-TV Duluth \(MN\)](#), October 22, 2014

Duluth, MN (NNCNOW.com) – Vice President Joe **Biden** is expected to personally congratulate Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, or DAIP, on its recent international recognition of “The Duluth Model” during his visit to Duluth on Thursday.

Just last week, the World Future Council named “The Duluth Model” as the world’s best policy, honoring it with the 2014 gold Future Policy Award during an event in Geneva, Switzerland.

“The Duluth Model” is a groundbreaking domestic violence policy created in the early 1980s by the late Ellen Pence.

October is also Domestic Violence Awareness month.

The Vice President will also head to Hibbing on Thursday where he will be lending political support to Representative Rick Nolan, who is seeking reelection to the 8th Congressional District.

Written by Kevin Jacobsen

VP Joe Biden To Campaign For Schneider In Illinois

[Associated Press](#), October 22, 2014

VERNON HILLS, Ill. (AP) – Vice President Joe **Biden** is expected to attend a rally in support of Democratic U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider.

Schneider is in a race with Republican Bob Dold in Illinois’ 10th congressional district. Schneider’s campaign says the vice president will headline an early voter rally on Wednesday afternoon at a community center in the suburb of Vernon Hills.

Biden is one of many political heavy weights who have visited Illinois in recent days to campaign for Democratic candidates. President Barack Obama was in Chicago on Sunday to help Gov. Pat Quinn in his campaign against GOP challenger Bruce Rauner (ROW’-nur). Quinn campaigned Tuesday with former President Bill Clinton.

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Bill Clinton Stumps For Quinn; Tells Workers To Look To Future

By Natasha Korecki

[Chicago Sun-Times](#), October 22, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton landed in Chicago on Tuesday, becoming the latest in a steady stream of star-studded pols to stump for Gov. Pat Quinn's re-election.

With U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Quinn at his side at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, Clinton defended Quinn's tenure as governor.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about: More jobs, higher incomes, better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities," Clinton told a crowd of hard-hat wearing workers at the steel pipe and tube manufacturing plant. "The rest is all background music."

Clinton worked to dispel thoughts that this election was a referendum on President Barack Obama as well as convince the crowd that a vote for Quinn was a vote for the future.

"When he took office, things were in a terrible mess . . . There were no easy answers," Clinton said of Quinn. "We had the worst crash since the Depression. . . . Don't be pessimistic about the future, and don't let your neighbors be."

Clinton's arrival came one day after Obama's departure. While here, Obama headed a 6,200-person rally at Chicago State University, then pushed for early voting on Monday. Vice President Joe **Biden** is on deck for Wednesday. First lady Michelle Obama as well as Hillary Clinton also have come through town for Quinn.

Republican Bruce Rauner, meanwhile, was pushing early voting in Henry, Tazewell and Winnebago counties. Rauner also tapped starpower as well: New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, who appeared with Rauner at a campaign stop in Rockford.

Christie, also the chair of the Republican Governors Association, has visited Illinois numerous times to campaign for Rauner and on Tuesday was grabbing headlines complaining about the Democrats' use of the minimum wage as a campaign tactic.

Meanwhile, Rauner's campaign has a different take on the state's record of job creation.

"When it comes to jobs, Illinois continues to lag behind its neighbors with one of the lowest growth rates in the Midwest," Rauner spokesman Mike Schrimpf said in an emailed statement.

But new numbers released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics show Illinois had the second best job growth in the nation. Last month, Illinois added nearly 20,000 jobs.

"Illinois has seen the nation's sharpest decline in unemployment over the last year, and our unemployment rate is at its lowest point in more than six years," Quinn's statement said.

Rauner and Quinn are locked in a tight election battle for the governor's mansion. The election is Nov. 4.

Vernon Hills Preparing For Vice President Joe Biden's Visit Wednesday

By Russell Lissau

[Chicago Daily Herald](#), October 21, 2014

The Vernon Hills Park District facility will be closed for the day and scheduled programs have been canceled. Additionally, motorists should expect corresponding delays and detours in the area.

As campaign workers, district staffers and others prepare for the event, the Sullivan Center has been a flurry of activity. U.S. flags and other decorations are being added to the decor, a stage is being built and barricades will be erected.

Park district Executive Director Jeff Fougrousse sounded excited about **Biden's** visit.

"When you can bring the vice president of the United States into our park district facility, that's a special moment for us," he said.

Doors will open to the public at 1 p.m., and things are expected to get underway about 1:30 p.m.

The Sullivan Center was chosen for **Biden's** visit because it's in the 10th Congressional District, where Democratic incumbent Brad Schneider is running a close race with Republican rival Robert Dold.

Schneider's campaign committee is covering the \$500 rental cost, said Jay Bullman, the center's facility supervisor. The contract was signed Oct. 14, Fougrousse said, and planning began in earnest a few days later.

Biden and Schneider will be joined by U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, who's also seeking re-election, and by Paul Vallas, who's running for lieutenant governor with Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn as his running mate.

Durbin's challenger is Republican Jim Oberweis. Quinn is running against the GOP's Bruce Rauner.

At the Sullivan Center, a preschool program, some dance classes, and a rhythmic gymnastics class previously set for Wednesday have been canceled. An after-school program will be relocated, too.

The dozen or so full-time employees who otherwise would be scheduled to work at the center won't have vacation days, Fougrousse said.

"They're still going to work, just at different locations," he said. "It's not a paid holiday for staff."

Biden's visit isn't causing any other significant disruptions in town, officials said.

Vernon Hills police are involved with traffic control coordination. The Secret Service will handle **Biden's** transportation, officials said.

Motorists should expect delays or detours in the area, police said.

Village employees aren't involved in any other aspects of the rally.

"It's a private event," Village Manager John Kalmar said.

When President Obama made a speech at Evanston's Northwestern University this month, university and city officials had much more to do.

"It's a much more overwhelming event when the sitting president comes to your campus," Northwestern spokesman Al Cabbage said.

University leaders had about 10 days to prepare. Cabbage and key staffers met daily to discuss security, facilities issues and other matters.

For example, three rows of seats in the rear of the Cahn Auditorium needed to be removed so risers could be installed for media crews. A temporary floor was built over the theater's orchestra pit, too.

"It was a lot of work," Cabbage said.

The Sullivan center has hosted political bigwigs before. In March 2012, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney had a rally there.

Bill Clinton Campaigns With Quinn On Southwest Side

[Chicago Tribune](#), October 20, 2014

Former President Bill Clinton made his pitch for Gov. Pat Quinn to several hundred hardhat-wearing workers Tuesday, saying the Democratic governor inherited an economic mess and has worked hard to grow jobs.

Clinton campaigned with Quinn at Wheatland Tube on the Southwest Side, while Republican challenger Bruce Rauner plans an afternoon early voting rally with New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie in Rockford. The two major Illinois governor candidates are kicking off the final, frenzied two weeks of campaigning before the Nov. 4 election with the help of some political star power this week.

Clinton said people should ignore the attack ads in the race with Republican challenger Bruce Rauner and instead focus on which candidate will be best for their future, noting that outside Illinois the election is being billed by Republicans as a referendum against President Barack Obama.

"What this election should be about is what your lives are about," Clinton said. "We need more jobs, higher incomes. Better education and training, secure health care and stronger families and communities."

"I am telling you, Pat Quinn deserves to be re-elected governor of Illinois," Clinton said. "When he took office things were in a terrible mess, and the governor can't print money, unlike Washington. And there were no easy answers."

Clinton alluded to the vast amounts of money being spent on the governor's race and referenced Quinn's difficult political position of running for re-election while promising to make a temporary income-tax increase permanent.

"It's election season, people are trying to sell you something. It's been my experience, and you think about this, when somebody's trying to make a sale and they want me to stop thinking, they probably don't have my best interest at heart," Clinton said. "If they trust me to disagree with them, even if I do, I might buy whatever it is they're selling because they trusted me, because I don't think they're trying to pull a scam. That's basically what the politics of this election is about."

"When you reach a certain age, you are a lot more concerned about younger people. About the future," Clinton said, mentioning his new granddaughter. "And I am here to support (U.S. Sen.) Dick Durbin and Pat Quinn because they are about the future."

Clinton's visit came on the heels of President Barack Obama's return to Chicago to stump for Quinn. He headlined a rally Sunday at Chicago State University to mark the start of early voting, then cast his ballot Monday. First lady Michelle Obama and former Secretary of State and possible presidential candidate Hillary Rodham Clinton helped raise money for Quinn earlier this month.

Christie, meanwhile, has been a frequent sight on the campaign trail with Rauner, hosting several fundraisers and shaking hands at restaurants across the state.

The parade of political celebrities visiting Illinois demonstrates what's at stake: Republicans see a way in after years of Democratic control, while Democrats are going all-out to prevent the potential embarrassment of losing the governor's mansion in Obama's home state.

On Wednesday, Vice President Joe **Biden** is scheduled to appear at an early voting rally with Quinn running mate Paul Vallas, Durbin and U.S. Rep. Brad Schneider at the Sullivan Community Center in Vernon Hills. Durbin faces Republican state Sen. Jim Oberweis, and Schneider has a rematch against former Republican U.S. Rep. Robert Dold.

Quinn and Rauner hit the campaign trail following the final televised debate Monday night in which the two unleashed negativity on each other for most of an hour. Quinn decried "savage cuts" in a Rauner budget, while the Republican challenger repeatedly branded the Democratic chief executive a "phony" and a "failure."

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Biden: LaGuardia Staff Thanked Me for Telling Truth About Airport

[NBC News](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** says workers at LaGuardia Airport thanked him for comments he made earlier this year where he compared the structure to a "third world country."

Biden Screws Up De Blasio's Vision Zero Plan

[New York Post](#), October 22, 2014

Joe **Biden** should get his Vision checked.

The gaffe-prone vice president reversed the words of Mayor de Blasio's signature "Vision Zero" traffic-safety plan, before catching the mistake and correcting himself during a press conference at Vaughn College in Queens on Monday about improving the region's airports.

Biden was mentioning a \$130 million federal grant to projects such as the proposed Moynihan train station in Manhattan when he veered off to praise "the mayor's zero vision, uh, Vision Zero plan to limit traffic accidents."

Biden has a reputation for putting his foot in his mouth.

During a visit to Philadelphia in February, he compared La Guardia Airport to airfields in Third World countries.

"If I blindfolded you and took you to La Guardia Airport in New York, you must think, 'I must be in some Third World country.' I'm not joking," he said back then.

On Monday, **Biden** quipped in Queens that his next landing at the airport was fretful.

"After I made that comment, about three weeks later, Air Force Two was landing at La Guardia and so my pilots all said, 'Oh, Lord, here we go. Do we need to put any Marines on board?'" **Biden** recalled.

Gov. Cuomo, who joined **Biden** at the event, couldn't resist returning to **Biden**'s comment, asking audience members in his Power Point presentation to identify who uttered the La Guardia quip from a list that included Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Jay Leno and Donald Trump.

"The answer is D, none of the above," said Cuomo, adding that the culprit was **Biden**. "And he was right," Cuomo said.

During the event, Cuomo unveiled a plan to redesign both La Guardia and Kennedy airports, with new restaurants and shops in the terminals, more hotels, and access via high-speed ferries and improved rail service.

We're Depending On Cuomo To Fix JFK, LaGuardia

[Newsday](#), October 22, 2014

With Vice President Joseph **Biden** at his side, Gov. Andrew Cuomo launched a welcome competition this week for ideas to help veer LaGuardia Airport back into the first world – and to help stabilize Kennedy Airport within that realm.

You don't have to be a frequent flier to understand the problems. Evening travelers waiting to depart LaGuardia's central terminal have been known to quietly sip coffee while watching a lively local mouse population frolic.

Arriving fliers headed for Manhattan by cab can test their stamina by pushing forward heavy luggage – and as often as not tiny, sleep-deprived, howling children – while the minutes creep by as they wait for a taxi to roll up.

Cuomo admirably volunteered to tackle these problems last January, even though the Port Authority owns the airports. But now he owns this project.

The vice president's presence at Cuomo's side Monday was an especially deft touch. **Biden** is the one who spoke for most of us not long ago when he blurted out that LGA is "Third World."

JFK isn't quite so hellish, but it's a strong runner-up. The airport is officially 15 miles from midtown. But these are New York City miles, not normal miles. So the trip from the luggage carousel to your hotel room can chew up hours that feel like days.

The AirTrain from JFK to the Long Island Rail Road or to the subway lines in Queens helps – provided you're not packing like a sultan.

Still, New York is tough place to get into and out of. So now, with an election looming, Cuomo says the design competition will begin in a month. We hope he means business when he says he wants local airports that are more attractive and more efficient.

So what would we like to see now at LGA and JFK?

Better access. Start with high-speed water taxis from Manhattan to LGA and JFK. And add subway service – maybe via the N train – from midtown to LaGuardia.

And for the folks running LGA: Build a better mousetrap. Please. Mice at the departure gate just won't do it.

Biden Plays Stand-Up, And The Joke's On Him

By Alex Thompson

[New York Times](#), October 21, 2014

The comedian Jay Leno was honored with the Kennedy Center's Mark Twain Prize for American Humor this week, but it was Vice President Joseph R. **Biden** Jr. who beat the comics to the punchline with his own self-mocking monologue.

"No one ever doubts I mean what I say. The problem is, I sometimes say all that I mean," said the gaffe-prone Mr. **Biden**, speaking before an audience of comics and V.I.P.'s at the vice presidential residence. America is great, Mr. **Biden** continued, because "we're self-assured enough to laugh at ourselves."

"Matter of fact," he added. "I'm so damn self-assured I don't stop laughing."

The audience included Mr. Leno, Seth Myers, Wanda Sykes and Robert Klein.

Mr. Myers — who relies on the vice president's blunders on NBC's "Late Night" — drew laughs when he said Mr. **Biden** had an open invitation to visit his New York apartment "because technically he helped pay for it."

Where There's Trouble, You'll Usually Find Joe Biden

By Lloyd Green

[The Daily Beast](#), October 21, 2014

His crisis-creating remarks and his son's drug-related discharge from the Navy are just the beginning. This guy's a train wreck.

According to the polls, Joe **Biden** doesn't have a prayer in 2016. And according to former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, **Biden** "has been wrong on nearly every major foreign-policy and national-security issue over the past four decades."

But two things are also certain: First, **Biden** is still Barack Obama's go-to-guy when partisan loyalty is at a premium. Faced with rising concern and criticism over the outbreak of Ebola, Obama tapped Ron Klain, **Biden**'s former chief of staff, to be America's Ebola czar. Second, **Biden**'s friends and family have not hesitated to profit from their ties to the vice president. **Biden**'s brother, James, and his son, Hunter, have cashed in on the family name, whether it be in Iraq or Ukraine. **Biden** may have the mien of the crazy uncle in the basement, but he is also a real reminder of what is wrong with politics.

Let's start with Klain. Like **Biden**, Klain is a consummate fixer, with Georgetown and Harvard Law School degrees thrown in for good measure. But for his political pedigree, Klain would have no business being Ebola coordinator. Ebola is not just another messaging problem.

Klain was the aide to Al Gore who was memorialized by Kevin Spacey in the HBO movie *Recount* as pushing for a more aggressive approach to, well, the 2000 Florida recount. Then, after failing in Florida, Klain became a Fannie Mae lobbyist who helped convince Congress and Fannie Mae's regulators that all was well with the world, even as Fannie Mae was inflating what would prove to be a catastrophic housing bubble.

And yet, **Biden** and Obama now seek to again unleash Klain on America. To be sure, Klain's public-health credentials are invisible, a fact that Obama himself has tacitly acknowledged. In announcing Klain's selection, Obama framed things this way: "Klain comes to the job with extensive experience in overseeing complex governmental operations and has good working relationships with leading members of Congress as well as senior administration officials." Not one word about Klain, medicine, and immunology.

In that sense, Klain is all too reminiscent of Harriet Miers, George W. Bush's White House counsel and his personal lawyer. Bush nominated Miers to the Supreme Court but was then compelled to pull her nomination after it became clear that Miers' loyalty to the president far exceeded her legal chops.

What prevented Miers from joining the court was the fact that she would have to run the gantlet of Senate confirmation, which is something that Klain, the Ebola czar, will not need to do. He is a creature of the White House, cloaked in executive privilege.

Ron Klain is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae.

Klain is not the first to crawl out of the swamp of **Biden** World on to the larger stage. He is cut from the same mold as Tom Donilon, Obama's former national security adviser, who, like Klain, also served at Fannie Mae; had his own ties to **Biden**; and worked in a job in which he was over his head. For the record, Donilon's brother, Mike, was **Biden**'s counselor between 2009 and 2013.

According to *The Nation*, "Fannie Mae paid Donilon, a longtime Democratic Party operative, \$15 million to lobby Congress to gut the power of government regulators." He was "a top executive at Fannie Mae during the period when cooking the books to increase executive compensation would later lead to a \$400 million fine."

More disturbingly, Donilon took center stage as national security adviser despite the fact that he was lightly regarded in national-security circles. In Bob Woodward's telling, Gen. Jim Jones, Donilon's predecessor at NSA, said to Donilon, "You have no credibility with the military.... you frequently pop off with absolute declarations about places you've never been, leaders you've never met, or colleagues you work with." Donilon was also Obama's guy while the president was laying out imaginary red lines to Syria.

But it's not just **Biden** placing loyalty over competence that makes him who he is, his tropism toward plagiarism, or even his tendency to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. It's **Biden**'s willingness to turn a blind eye in the face of his family members trading on **Biden**'s job as vice president for fun, profit, and disgrace that completes the picture.

Take Hunter **Biden**, the veep's younger son. Just last week, it was reported that the 44-year-old Hunter was discharged from the Navy after testing positive for cocaine. But here's the thing. To get into the Navy, Hunter needed a separate waiver on account of his prior drug use. History does repeat itself.

And then there's that matter of Hunter and Ukraine. Back in May, Burisma Holdings, Ukraine's largest private natural-gas producer, announced that Hunter had joined its board. To which the White House could only reply, "Hunter **Biden** and other members of the **Biden** family are obviously private citizens, and where they work does not reflect an endorsement by the administration or by the vice president or president."

And then there's James **Biden**, the vice president's brother, who made a go at winning public-housing contracts in Iraq. As reported in the waning days of the 2012 presidential campaign, after Joe became vice president, James joined New Jersey-based Hill International as its executive vice president.

So what? So this. Hill's business is managing construction projects in the Middle East and the United States, and lo and behold, six months after James joined Hill in 2010, the company won a \$1.5 billion contract to build at least 100,000 affordable homes in Iraq. Talk about coincidence.

Or not. According to published reports, the State Department, then run by Hillary Clinton, and the Iraqi government were instrumental in Hill winning the contract. Also at the time, **Biden** was Obama's point person on Iraq, and like Klain, who is no expert on public health, James **Biden** was no maven on public housing.

The White House may have contemplated dumping Joe **Biden** from the ticket. But that was then. These days, it is **Biden** who again finds himself at the center of all things Obama.

Even as the United States struggles to build a coalition against ISIS, it is **Biden** who tweaks Turkey, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, without appreciating the havoc that he would wreak, tweaks for which he would ultimately be forced to apologize. We have seen the diplomatic crises **Biden** can stir up. But sadly, it's hardly the worst of **Biden**'s handiwork.

Lloyd Green was the opposition research counsel to the George H.W. Bush campaign in 1988, and served in the Department of Justice between 1990 and 1992.

'White Boy' Biden Got It Right And Wrong About The Tea Party

By Earl Ofari Hutchinson

[Huffington Post](#), October 22, 2014

Vice President Joe **Biden** got the tongues furiously wagging again after a recent meeting with black ministers in South Carolina. First he called himself the virtually lone "white boy" in a black Wilmington, Delaware neighborhood. Then he lambasted the tea party as "crazy." The reference to himself as the "white boy" was more amusing than anything else. Since **Biden** obviously took great relish in making the point to a mostly black gathering that he's one of them too and by extension so is the Democratic Party.

But it was his typecast of the tea party as a bunch of loons that was far more eye catching. He got it right and wrong about it. It's easy to sneer at, and even poke fun, at a party that, since it burst on the scene in the aftermath of President Obama's first presidential election win, some of its members have come off as a cross between a KKK Klavern and a PT Barnum clown circus act. After their first flush of growth, the party's slide in getting candidates elected and gaining more popular support has been relentlessly downhill. Polls repeatedly show that a majority of Americans look on the tea party with everything from disgust to indifference. Gallup poll numbers show that less than one in four Americans now back the party. But looks can be deceiving, and that's never truer than in politics, and this is where **Biden** got it wrong about the tea party.

The best guess is that of the two hundred plus House Republicans, less than half of them are there because of tea party support or are directly affiliated with the tea party. Yet this minority within the GOP controlled House has continually held the House and Congress hostage on everything from spending on all domestic programs to its dozens of obstructionist and showboat votes repealing the Affordable Care Act. Meanwhile, the Senate is regarded as the one sure firewall between the tea party-influenced, GOP-controlled House getting its way on legislation and its initiatives.

GOP Senate leaders have been careful to keep the tea party at arm's length and the various official GOP campaign committees have loudly made it clear that in the 2014 and the 2016 elections they will

only bankroll GOP candidates who are electable. This means candidates who are sans the tea party stigma and odor. They have been as good as their word and now crow that the current crop of GOP contenders in the key Senate races have a better than fair shot at winning precisely because they are seen as sensible and electable.

This is much less it than it appears. The supposedly moderate GOP Senators have toed the tea party line in opposing tougher gun control provisions and immigration reform. And they have hammered away on spending cuts on everything from Head Start to food nutrition programs, and have torpedoed key Obama administration judicial and staff appointments.

At every step, they have cast a wary but congenial eye on the tea party. There's no mystery why. The 2014 midterm elections shape up to be a cliffhanger in the key battleground states between the GOP and Democrats, especially incumbent Democratic senators. The incessant media talk of a GOP tsunami in those states is just that – talk. The Democrats are rolling the dice hard in the key match-ups in those states and are spending the bank on their candidates. That makes the tea party even more vital to the GOP, shrunken numbers are not. It can make enough noise and in some districts turn out sufficient numbers to make a difference in close contests. That's even more vital in swing districts with Democratic congresspersons who are on shaky ground with conservative voters.

The various polls that show the declining tea party fortunes have also noted that the tea party's backer's vehemence toward the Democratic Party is unrelenting. This presents yet another dilemma and opportunity for the GOP. With nowhere else for tea party adherents to go other than the GOP, this could open the gates wide again for more challenges from tea party backed candidates to GOP incumbents in 2014 and beyond. This perpetually puts GOP congresspersons in the disastrous position of having to continually look over their shoulders to see if there is a tea party candidate waiting in the wings to challenge if they do not tow the tea party line. They have turned this to their advantage by simply co-opting much of the tea party line on the issues without calling it that.

“White boy” **Biden** did not misspeak or engage in campaign ballyhoo to please black Democrats in South Carolina or anywhere else for that matter when he round-housed the tea party. The tea party's anti-Obama antics have brought them richly deserved public ridicule. But beyond the ridicule they're still very much a force to be reckoned with and the hostage taking success they've had and continue to have with the GOP is ample proof of that.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He is a frequent MSNBC contributor. He is an associate editor of New America Media. He is a weekly co-host of the Al Sharpton Show on American Urban Radio Network. He is the host of the weekly Hutchinson Report on KTYM 1460 AM Radio Los Angeles and KPFK-Radio and the Pacifica Network.

Backlash Against Leon Panetta, Robert Gates Over Memoirs

By Tim Starks

[Roll Call](#), October 22, 2014

President Obama's former Defense secretaries are coming under fire in light of their memoirs that criticize the commander-in-chief while he's still in office.

Retiring Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. said he doesn't plan to issue a critical tell-all memoir mid-presidency the way Leon E. Panetta did recently.

“I think what Leon said in the book is unfortunate. Frankly, I don't think it's something that a former Cabinet member should do while the president he served is still in office. That's not something that I would even consider doing,” he told CNN in an interview that aired late Monday.

Holder isn't the only administration official to have scolded Panetta, but Vice President Joseph R. **Biden**, Jr.'s (@joebiden) declaration of his memoir as "inappropriate" was overshadowed by remarks he made that same day which preceded an apology to Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

Arthur Cyr, a professor at Carthage College and senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, on Tuesday extended the criticism to Robert M. Gates, as well.

Gates' memoirs are especially significant. His career unfolded at the CIA, where he became the first director to rise through the ranks. His tenure as defense secretary spanned the two administrations of Barack Obama and George W. Bush, unprecedented bipartisan service. Gates became regarded as a dedicated public servant. His score-settling in print therefore was surprising.

...Gates' memoirs have helped the Republicans in partisan political terms. Likewise, Panetta's criticism of others, in particular President Obama, no doubt will assist the opposition. This is even more ironic, given his career as a Democratic Party spokesman and member of Congress.

Obama's Day: Cabinet Members

By David Jackson

[USA Today](#), October 21, 2014

President Obama plans to spend Tuesday in meetings with Cabinet members from the Treasury and Pentagon.

In the late morning, Obama will discuss the U.S. economy with Treasury Secretary Jack Lew.

The late afternoon brings a presidential meeting with Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. One of the topics is likely to be the battle against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

In addition, Obama has his weekly lunch with Vice President **Biden**.

The president is also expected to receive updates from aides on efforts to contain the Ebola virus.

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Now Driving The Straight Talk Express: Senator Carper Of Delaware

By Senator Carper of Delaware Kathleen Hunter

[Bloomberg](#), October 21, 2014

It's not common, particularly in campaign season, to hear straight talk from Washington politicians. But Senator Tom Carper, a Democrat, said what he meant – and meant what he said – in response to questions posed during a Bloomberg News event today in New York. Ebola

Asked about flaws in the U.S. response, he criticized his colleagues in Congress for using political "scare tactics."

"Some of my colleagues have been shameful in the way, frankly, they've manipulated this for purposes that I think we can all understand," he said. "The way people have just been playing the scare tactics is just, I think, shameful." 'Boots on the Ground'

Asked if President Barack Obama was being disingenuous in promising not to put "boots on the ground" to combat IS, he agreed: the President may have gone too far.

"If you go back in time, you'll find that presidents in the past have not always been fulling forthcoming: Not just this president, but other presidents," he said. Carper cited George W. Bush, who he said was not completely honest with the American public for reasons that "are unexplainable and unforgivable."

"So this may be an indiscretion – it is minor compared to what his immediate predecessor engaged in," Carper said. Hunter **Biden**

Asked if getting discharged from the Navy Reserve after testing positive for cocaine was an appropriate punishment for Vice President Joe **Biden**'s son Hunter, Carper – a close friend of the Bidens and a former Navy reservist – did not try to play both sides.

“We have pretty bright lines in terms of what was acceptable and what was unacceptable,” Carper said, growing visibly emotional. “And I think he was treated pretty much like anybody else would have been treated.”

The Hunter Biden Chronicles

By Michelle Malkin

[National Review](#), October 22, 2014

Everything you need to know about Beltway nepotism, corporate cronyism, and corruption can be found in the biography of Robert Hunter **Biden**. Where are the Occupy Wall Street rabble-rousers and enemies of elitist privilege when you need them? Straining their neck muscles to look the other way.

The youngest son of Vice President Joe **Biden** made news last week after the Wall Street Journal revealed he had been booted from the Navy Reserve for cocaine use. His drug abuse was certainly no surprise to the Navy, which issued him a waiver for a previous drug offense before commissioning him as a public-affairs officer at the age of 43. The Navy also bent over backward a second time with an age waiver so he could secure the cushy part-time job.

Advertisement Papa **Biden** loves to tout his middle-class, “Average Joe” credentials. But rest assured, if his son had been Hunter Smith or Hunter Jones or Hunter Brown, the Navy’s extraordinary dispensations would be all but unattainable. Oh, and if he had been Hunter Palin, the New York Times would be on its 50th front-page investigative report by now.

Despite the disgraceful ejection from our military, Hunter’s Connecticut law license won’t be subject to automatic review. Because, well, **Biden**.

Biden’s bennies are not just one-offs. Skating by, flouting rules, and extracting favors are the story of Hunter’s life.

Hunter’s first job, acquired after Joe **Biden** won his 1996 Senate reelection bid in Delaware, was with MBNA. That’s the credit-card conglomerate and top campaign donor that forked over nearly \$63,000 in bundled primary and general contributions from its employees to Senator **Biden**. As I’ve reported previously, Daddy **Biden** secured his custom-built, multimillion-dollar house in Delaware’s ritziest Chateau Country neighborhood with the help of a leading MBNA corporate executive. Average Joe went on to carry legislative water for MBNA in the Senate for years.

Hunter zoomed up to senior vice president by early 1998 and then scored a plum position in the Clinton administration’s Commerce Department, specializing in “electronic commerce,” before returning to MBNA three years later as a high-priced “consultant.” While he collected those “consulting” (translation: nepotistic access-trading) fees, Hunter became a “founding partner” in the lobbying firm of Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair in 2002.

William Oldaker was Papa **Biden**’s former fundraiser, campaign treasurer, and general counsel — a Beltway barnacle whose Democratic-machine days dated back to Teddy Kennedy’s 1980 presidential bid. Under Oldaker’s tutelage, Hunter lobbied for drug companies, universities, and other deep-pocketed clients to the tune of nearly \$4 million billed to the company by 2007.

Coincidentally, then-Illinois senator Barack Obama personally requested and secured cozy taxpayer-subsidized earmarks for several of Hunter’s clients.

Hunter got himself appointed to multiple corporate board positions, including a directorship with Eudora Global. It's an investment firm founded by one Jeffrey Cooper, head of one of the biggest asbestos-litigation firms in the country. SimmonsCooper, based in Madison County, Ill., donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to **Biden** the Elder's various political campaigns over the past decade — all while the firm poured \$6.5 million into lobbying against a key tort-reform bill, which **Biden** worked hard to defeat. Cooper also contributed to the Delaware attorney-general campaign of Hunter's older brother, Beau, and paid Beau for legal work on lucrative asbestos-litigation cases.

Hunter also was previously a top official at Paradigm Global Advisors, a hedge-fund holding company founded with Vice President **Biden**'s brother, James, and marketed by convicted finance fraudster Allen Stanford. As Paradigm chairman, Hunter oversaw half a billion dollars of client money invested in hedge funds while remaining a lobbyist at Oldaker, **Biden**, and Belair. Cooper chipped in \$2 million for the ill-fated venture, which went bust amid nasty fraud lawsuits.

Continually failing upward, Hunter snagged a seat on the board of directors of taxpayer-subsidized, stimulus-inflated Amtrak, where he pretended not to be a lobbyist, but rather an "effective advocate" for the government railroad system serving the 1 percenters' D.C.–New York City corridor.

So where does a coke-abusing influence peddler go after raking in gobs of Daddy-enabled dough and abusing the U.S. Navy's ill-considered generosity? Back to Cronyland! Hunter joined Ukrainian natural-gas company Burisma Holdings — owned by a powerful Russian government sympathizer who fled to Russia in February — this spring. The hypocritical lobbyist-bashers at the White House deny he will be lobbying and deny any conflict of interest.

Meanwhile, Just Like You Joe was whipping up class envy in South Carolina last week. "Corporate profits have soared," he railed, thanks to "these guys running hedge funds in New York," who are to blame for "income inequality." You know, like his son and brother and their Beltway back-scratching patrons.

The Bidens: They're not like us.

— Michelle Malkin is the author of Culture of Corruption: Obama and His Team of Tax Cheats, Crooks and Cronies. Her e-mail address is . © 2014 Creators.com

Women In The World Texas Brings Big Names To San Antonio

[KSAT-TV San Antonio](#), October 21, 2014

SAN ANTONIO – The Women in the World Texas conference comes to San Antonio Wednesday, and will showcase an array of social, cultural and humanitarian leaders from around the world.

Top names in attendance include Gloria Steinem, Eva Longoria, Dolores Huerta, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Dr. Jill **Biden** and Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe.

Panels will be held to discuss politics, feminism, and other issues affecting women.

KSAT will be at the conference and will have live updates on Twitter (@KSATnews) and on Facebook throughout the day.

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NEW YORK TIMES AND WASHINGTON POST OP-EDS

Alison Lundergan Grimes, Kay Hagan And Other Candidates Avoid Obama

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

After a few days of trying to ignore the question, Michelle Nunn, the Democratic candidate for the United States Senate in Georgia, acknowledged on Friday that she had voted for Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012. By this year's standards, that's pretty forthright, especially compared with Alison Lundergan Grimes, the Democrat running for the Senate in Kentucky, who refuses to discuss her presidential vote.

Only one Democratic Senate candidate this cycle has been willing to appear with the president on the stump: Gary Peters in Michigan. The others have spent months keeping their distance from Mr. Obama and some of his best policies. Even Ms. Nunn just started running a television ad complaining that an attack ad by her Republican opponent, David Perdue, featured a misleading photo of her and Mr. Obama. The photo was actually taken at an event honoring President George H.W. Bush, she said.

The panicky Democratic flight away from President Obama — and from some of the party's most important positions — is not a surprise. Mr. Obama remains highly unpopular among white voters, particularly in Southern states where candidates like Ms. Nunn, Ms. Grimes and several others are struggling to establish leads. But one of the reasons for his unpopularity is that nervous members of his own party have done a poor job of defending his policies over the nearly six years of his presidency, allowing a Republican narrative of failure to take hold.

Few voters know that the 2009 stimulus bill contributed heavily to the nation's economic recovery, saving and creating 2.5 million jobs. Not a word of it is spoken on the campaign trail, where little credit is also given to the White House for months of promising economic news.

Similarly, the Affordable Care Act, one of the most far-reaching and beneficial laws to have been passed by Congress in years, gets little respect even among the Democratic candidates who voted for it. Though none support the Republican position of repeal, most talk about the need to "fix" the health law, as if it were a wreck alongside the road rather than a vehicle providing millions of people with health coverage.

"When I think about the health care law, frustrated, disappointed, you can put a lot of words toward it, but every day I work to try to fix it," said Senator Mark Begich of Alaska, in a radio ad. (Mr. Begich voted for the law.) In a recent debate, Senator Kay Hagan, a Democrat of North Carolina, talked mostly about the "common-sense fixes" she wants to make to the law.

Several Democratic candidates, including Ms. Hagan, Ms. Nunn, and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, quickly adopted the right-wing talking point that President Obama needs to impose a travel ban on all residents of African countries with Ebola cases, even though most public-health experts say such a ban would be ineffective and could make the situation worse.

Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, who has fought loudly against the president's energy policies, has scurried so far to the right that she even opposes legalizing marijuana for medical purposes, though her leading Republican opponent supports it.

Many of these candidates are running in difficult political environments and are being careful about what they say or don't say in hopes of preserving Democratic control of the Senate. They run the risk, though, of alienating important constituencies who prefer a party with a spine, especially black voters, who remain very supportive of Mr. Obama. By not standing firmly for their own policies, Democrats send a message to voters that the unending Republican criticism of the president is legitimate. There is much that is going right in this country, and there is still time for Democrats to say so.

HBO And CBS Move Toward Selling Content Directly To Consumers

By Editorial Board, New York Times

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Executives at media and cable companies have been resisting the idea of selling TV channels à la carte for years, saying it was not financially feasible. But that resistance is starting to give way to a more pragmatic approach that should benefit consumers.

Last week, officials at HBO said they would start selling an Internet-only subscription to the network's movies and shows next year. Also last week, CBS started selling all its programming online for \$5.99 a month. And companies like Dish Network and Verizon are planning to sell Web-based TV subscriptions.

The cable bundle — that overflowing buffet of hundreds of TV channels that can cost \$80 a month or more — has understandably frustrated consumers. Many Americans would prefer to pay less for their favorite channels. But cable companies like Comcast and Time Warner and media conglomerates like Viacom and Disney have had a huge financial incentive to push consumers to buy ever larger bundles for higher prices. These companies have also successfully lobbied against bills introduced by lawmakers like Senator John McCain that would encourage cable companies to sell channels à la carte.

But the success of streaming video companies like Netflix and Hulu and the fear that many younger Americans may never subscribe to cable or satellite TV have forced media and telecommunications executives to rethink their positions. Companies like HBO and CBS are betting that they can reach more subscribers by cutting out the middleman and selling directly to consumers.

That could, indeed, help some Americans save money. For example, people who only want to watch “Game of Thrones” and “Girls” might be able to buy an online HBO subscription for, say, \$20 a month, not the \$70 they would have to pay Comcast for a cable subscription that includes HBO and dozens of channels they do not want. (Consumers will, of course, have to pay separately for a high-speed Internet connection.)

The coming wave of Internet-based TV services might also make the cable and media industries more efficient. Some niche networks that have a small but strong followings might find it more lucrative to ditch cable companies and establish a direct relationship with viewers.

Nonetheless, there will be problems. Some companies might try to make up for the revenue they lose as consumers cancel cable-TV subscriptions by raising the price of high-speed Internet service. Most American households buy broadband Internet service from a cable or phone company, and those companies could interfere with or block online video streams.

Earlier this year, Netflix complained that some of its customers had a hard time watching its movies on their Internet connections from Comcast, Verizon and other companies. Those problems were resolved when Netflix agreed to pay the broadband companies to connect its system directly to their networks.

That is why it is important that the Federal Communications Commission enact strong rules prohibiting broadband companies from blocking or interfering with Internet content. Regulators must also be careful not to allow the industry to become even less competitive as large companies like Comcast and AT&T seek to acquire smaller companies like Time Warner Cable and DirecTV.

Some Good News On The Ebola Front

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Americans who are worried about the risk of an Ebola outbreak in this country can take heart from two recent successes. In Texas, 43 people who were being monitored because they had had direct or

indirect contact with Thomas Eric Duncan, a Liberian who died of Ebola in a Dallas hospital, were found clear of the Ebola virus on Monday.

Also that day, the World Health Organization declared Nigeria free of Ebola. The Nigerian health authorities were able to snuff out a small outbreak that could have spread through the crowded slums of Lagos, a city with 21 million people, and beyond.

The Nigerian success can be attributed primarily to an extraordinarily vigorous effort to track down everyone who had contact with a possibly infected person and isolating and treating anyone found to have the disease so that they would not infect anyone else. This strategy is what American health officials mean when they say Ebola can be contained through standard public health measures of tracking and isolation.

Nigeria's outbreak started on July 20 when a Liberian who was a naturalized American citizen defied medical advice, left a hospital in Monrovia, Liberia, where he was being held for observation, and flew to Lagos. He died five days later but not before infecting nine doctors and nurses who thought he had malaria.

An all-out effort to find and isolate hundreds of potential contacts in Lagos and other parts of the country held the outbreak to only 19 patients who came down with Ebola, of whom seven died. That was deemed a "spectacular success story" by the W.H.O. Another West African country, Senegal, which had a single imported case and a smaller number of contacts to trace and isolate, was declared free of Ebola on Friday.

Both countries will need to keep their guards up. As long as the epidemic rages out of control in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, there will always be a risk that infected people will leave their home countries and seek better conditions elsewhere.

In Dallas, the 43 people being monitored emerged from the 21-day incubation period for the virus without a single one becoming sick. That includes Mr. Duncan's fiancée, who cared for him when he was sick, and three other family members in the same apartment; all four stayed in the apartment for several days with contaminated towels and bedding that had not been sanitized.

It remains possible that additional health care workers — beyond the two nurses who are already infected — will come down with Ebola. Both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital made mistakes in dealing with the Ebola patient and the nurses who cared for him. They have now taken steps to prevent further mishaps. The danger of an outbreak affecting the public in this country is very, very slight, and the experience in Nigeria and Senegal shows that diligent responses can work.

Inequality In Hong Kong

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

The talks in Hong Kong between pro-Chinese government officials and pro-democracy student leaders are aimed mainly at easing tensions in the streets. Not on the agenda is fundamental reform of the conditions that provoked the unrest.

Chief among these conditions is China's refusal to loosen its grip on the city's political system by allowing full and open democratic elections for Hong Kong's top public office, as it had promised to do. The protesters insist that it is their right to choose who runs Hong Kong, but Beijing-backed officials have supported only cosmetic changes to the city's restrictive election law.

A related problem, as Neil Gough of The Times reported recently, is a persistent and widening wealth gap in Hong Kong. A small pro-Chinese government elite has profited greatly from the city's role in

the rise of China, while incomes and opportunities for the middle and working classes have been squeezed. This elite, which controls the most lucrative sectors of Hong Kong's economy, fears that greater democracy — in the form of political participation and shared prosperity — would threaten the increasingly monopolistic crony capitalism from which they benefit.

The inequality that has helped to fuel the unrest in Hong Kong is reflected in the name the protesters took for their effort — Occupy Central, an allusion to the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations in the United States three years ago that elevated the issue of inequality in America's political and economic debates.

Occupy Central, however, has a bigger challenge than its American namesake. It faces a totalitarian regime determined to deny its opponents the political means of changing their circumstances.

The problem in America is a dysfunctional political system that puts party ambitions and campaign donations above public needs. Still, elections and other established political processes, when used and protected, provide a way to identify and choose new and presumably more responsive leaders.

The worthy goal, in Hong Kong and the United States, is to link robust democracy to robust capitalism to broadly raise living standards. Like all worthy goals, it is not achievable or sustainable without struggle.

The Upside Of Lower Oil Prices

By The Editorial Board

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

The price of crude oil has fallen roughly 25 percent since a peak in June, but whether that's good news or bad depends on where you stand. It's bad for members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC, and other nations and governments that rely heavily on oil exports because their income has taken a huge hit. It's especially bad for Russia and Iran, which have relied on high oil prices to defy the United States and Western sanctions. It's bad for the environment because cheaper oil means fewer incentives to develop alternative and less carbon-intensive sources of energy.

But it's not bad for Saudi Arabia, the kingpin of the global oil industry. Saudi Arabia has ample cash reserves to withstand a drop in income, shows no inclination to reduce production and seems to prefer putting a squeeze on its geopolitical rivals in Iran and Russia. For the United States, it's a mixed bag. American oil production is soaring, and lower prices could slow production of shale oil, which is expensive and needs higher prices to be profitable. But lower oil prices mean reduced costs for consumers and businesses and a boost for economies across the industrialized world.

The large increase in American production is, in fact, one reason cited for the drop in prices. The other is a continuing slump in demand in Europe and other developed regions and slower growth in China. Characteristically, Russia has sniffed an American-led plot, with articles in the government press recalling how a sudden and sharp increase in Saudi production in 1985 caused prices to drop so low that the Soviet economy folded, followed by the Soviet state.

All that will make for some heated debates at the next scheduled OPEC meeting in November. But regardless of whether the oil ministers decide to reduce production and nudge prices up, the fact is that oil prices will always rise and fall in response to geopolitical crises, economic trends and natural disasters. For now, it is enough to see petro-dictators at least temporarily humbled and forced to understand that oil riches do not give them license to bend the international order to their will. And it is good for industrial and developing countries to get some juice into their economies.

But it is imperative that the United States and all other beneficiaries resist the temptation to use what could be a fleeting drop in prices to slow the search for alternative sources of energy. The planet, alas, does not have the resilience of oil prices.

Capitalism's Suffocating Music

By Frank Bruni

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Onstage before thousands of fans, Sam Smith sang "Stay With Me," beseeching his partner in a one-night stand for a few minutes more, and I half wondered if the two of them needed the extra time to finish bottles of Miller Lite, because a printed plug for the beer hovered over his head.

Performing "Summertime Sadness," Lana Del Rey told a lover to "kiss me hard before you go." Would she be texting him later with a Samsung Galaxy, the smartphone for which the stage on which she appeared was visibly named?

And while I'd never thought about any car in connection with the musicians in the band Interpol, I came to picture them caroming from gig to gig in a Civic or an Accord. "Honda" floated over them as they gave their concert.

For every stage, a different sponsor. Behind every beat, a different brand.

This happened in early October. I was at the Austin City Limits Music Festival, and I was at the limits of my patience. I hadn't expected all of these corporate come-ons, so pervasive in other precincts, to be assaulting me here of all places.

"Keep Austin Weird" is the Texas capital's unofficial slogan, a clue to its proudly subversive soul. And a gathering of bare-armed, bare-legged lovers of song and smokers of pot on a gigantic field brings to mind Woodstock, not Austin Ventures, which provides financing to start-ups, and RetailMeNot, which distributes discount coupons. Those firms, too, were sponsors of stages.

Someone shoved a free sample of Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal at me on my way in. Someone else handed out free beer cozies advertising Imperial, a brew on sale at the event. Plastered all over the place were posters for "Not That Kind of Girl," the new memoir by a certain "Girls" creator. The festival had been misnamed. This was Lenapalooza.

I kept thinking of another writer, David Foster Wallace. His novel "Infinite Jest," published in 1996, imagines a tomorrow in which time itself is auctioned off to the highest bidder and the calendar becomes a billboard. There's the "Year of the Whopper," the "Year of the Whisper-Quiet Maytag Dishmaster" and even the "Year of the Tucks Medicated Pad" — a 12-month paean to posterior discomfort, 52 weeks in honor of hemorrhoids.

Is that future so far off? While recording devices have liberated many of us from commercials on television, the rest of our lives are awash in ads. They're now nestled among the trailers at movies. They flicker on the screens in taxis.

They're woven so thoroughly into sporting events, from Nascar races to basketball games, that it's hard to imagine an era when they weren't omnipresent. But in a story earlier this year on the website Consumerist, Chris Moran reported that 20 years ago, only one of the major-league baseball stadiums had a corporate moniker, Busch Stadium in St. Louis.

In contrast, 20 of the 30 stadiums now have sponsors.

It's the same with football, maybe worse. On the weekend after I got back from Austin, I went to watch the New York Jets play, and within five minutes of my arrival at MetLife Stadium, I was confronted with all sorts of sub-sponsors.

Near the Verizon gate, I spotted a V.I.P. section called the Hertz suites and saw signs that identified JetBlue as the official airline of the team, Toyota as its official vehicle and the Microsoft Surface as the official tablet of the National Football League. I resolved to check out the restrooms for an official toilet paper. (Note to Cottonelle: I did, and there's an unclaimed opportunity for you, if you can beat Charmin to the punch.)

Inside the stadium, the Verizon scoreboard was not to be confused with the Bud Light scoreboard or the Pepsi scoreboard.

When Americans talk about how crass contemporary life can seem, this advertising onslaught is part of what they're reacting to. And their growing chilliness toward corporations and sense of capitalism run amok aren't just about the salaries of chief executives and the tax dodges in play. They're about the way hucksterism invades everything, scooping up everyone.

Matthew McConaughey is at his career's summit, with a recent Oscar for "Dallas Buyers Club" and a splendid performance in "Interstellar" (to be released next month), and what's he doing with this clout? He's putting it behind the wheel of a Lincoln and peddling luxury cars the way Beyoncé has pushed Pepsi all these years.

Sellers keep finding new, willing vessels for their logos everywhere they turn. Will we someday travel from San Francisco to Northern California across the Golden Gate Bridge, for a hike in the Wells Fargo Redwood Forest?

It's a vendor's world. We're just pawns in it, even when all we want to do is hum a simple tune.

The Building Blocks Of A Good Pre-K

By Shael Polakow-Suransky And Nancy Nager

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

WITH the introduction of universal pre-K in New York City, we have created a new entry point into our public school system. This raises a key question: What do we want our children's first experiences in school to be? What does a good education look like for 4-year-olds?

This summer, Bank Street College of Education led training for 4,000 of New York's pre-K teachers, including both veterans and hundreds of people who started teaching pre-K for the first time last month. Worried teachers talked about how the pressure to achieve good outcomes on the third-grade state exams has been trickling down to early childhood classrooms in the form of work sheets, skill drills and other developmentally inappropriate methods.

The problem is real, and it is not unique to New York City. Earlier this year, Daphna Bassok and Anna Rorem, educational policy researchers at the University of Virginia, found strong evidence that current kindergarten classrooms rely too heavily on teacher-directed instruction. Their study, "Is Kindergarten the New First Grade?" revealed that the focus on narrow academic skills crowded out time for play, exploration and social interaction. In a 2009 report for the Alliance for Childhood, "Crisis in the Kindergarten," Edward Miller and Joan Almon reported that kindergarten teachers felt that prescriptive curricular demands and pressure from principals led them to prioritize academic skill-building over play.

This is a false choice. We do not need to pick between play and academic rigor.

While grown-ups recognize that pretending helps children find their way into the world, many adults think of play as separate from formal learning. The reality is quite different. As they play, children develop vital cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional skills. They make discoveries, build knowledge, experiment with literacy and math and learn to self-regulate and interact with others in socially appropriate ways. Play

is also fun and interesting, which makes school a place where children look forward to spending their time. It is so deeply formative for children that it must be at the core of our early childhood curriculum.

What does purposeful play look like? When you step into an exemplary pre-K classroom, you see a room organized by a caring, responsive teacher who understands child development. Activity centers are stocked with materials that invite exploration, fire the imagination, require initiative and prompt collaboration. The room hums.

In the blocks area, two girls build a bridge, talking to each other about how to make sure it doesn't collapse and taking care not to bump into the buildings of children next to them. In an area with materials for make-believe, children enact an elaborate family scenario after resolving who will be the mommy, who will be the grandpa and who will be the puppy. Another group peers through a magnifying glass to examine a collection of pine cones and acorns. On the rug, children lie on their stomachs turning the pages of books they have selected, while at the easel a boy dips his brush into red paint and swoops the paint mostly onto his paper.

The teacher observes and comments. She shifts from group to group, talking with children about their work ("I see that you made a big red circle."); helping children resolve a conflict ("You both want to be the mommy. What should we do?"); posing an open-ended question to stimulate exploration and problem-solving ("What do you notice when you use the magnifying glass that is different from when you use your eyes?"); and guiding children to manage themselves ("When you finish your snack, what activity would you like to choose?").

Barbara Biber, one of Bank Street's early theorists, argued that play develops precisely the skills — and, just as important, the disposition — children need to be successful throughout their lives. The child "projects his own pattern of the world into the play," she wrote, "and in so doing brings the real world closer to himself. He is building the feeling that the world is his to understand, to interpret, to puzzle about, to make over. For the future we need citizens in whom these attitudes are deeply ingrained."

Earlier in the 20th century, the Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky made the related argument that children's thinking develops through activity-based learning and social interactions with adults and peers. When teachers base their curriculums on Dr. Vygotsky's ideas, there are significant benefits for children's capacity to think, to plan and to sustain their attention on difficult tasks.

Play has long-lasting benefits. What is referred to as self-regulation in preschool becomes resiliency in high school. The University of Pennsylvania psychologist Angela Duckworth has found that this trait, which she famously calls grit, can make or break students, especially low-income students. Over the past three years, the New York City Department of Education developed a framework to support the core behavioral elements that drive college and career readiness. Many of them — persistence, planning, the ability to communicate and the capacity to collaborate — have their roots in early childhood.

Next fall, there will be more students in pre-K in New York City than there are in the entire school system of Atlanta or Seattle. To his credit, Mayor Bill de Blasio has not only pushed for expanding access but has also insisted on improving quality and put real money into training and materials. This is a strong start. But we still need to help parents, administrators and policy makers see what the children themselves know intuitively: Classrooms that pulse with meaningful play are our smartest investment.

Shael Polakow-Suransky, who served as senior deputy chancellor of the New York City Department of Education from 2011-14, is the president of Bank Street College, where Nancy Nager is a professor of education and child development.

Putin And The Pope

By Thomas L. Friedman

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Reading the papers these days I find that the two world leaders who stir the most passion in me are Pope Francis and Vladimir Putin, the president of Russia. One is everything you'd want in a leader, the other everything you wouldn't want. One holds sway over 1.2 billion Roman Catholics, the other over nine time zones. One keeps surprising me with his capacity for empathy, the other by how much he has become a first-class jerk and thug. But neither can be ignored and both have an outsized influence on the world today.

First, the pope. At a time when so many leaders around the world are looking to promote their political fortunes by exploiting grievances and fault lines, we have a pope asking his flock to do something hard, something outside their comfort zone, pushing them to be more inclusive of gays and divorced people.

Yes, Francis was rebuffed by conservative bishops at a recent Vatican synod when he asked them to embrace the notion that "homosexuals have gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community," adding, "are we capable of welcoming these people, guaranteeing to them a fraternal space in our communities?"

But, as an editorial in this paper noted: "The very fact that Francis ordered church leaders to address these challenges seems a landmark in Vatican history." The pope asked that rejected language be published for all to see, while also cautioning against "hostile inflexibility — that is, wanting to close oneself within the written word, and not allowing oneself to be surprised by God."

"Hostile inflexibility?" Whose leadership does that describe? Look at Putin's recent behavior: His military was indirectly involved in downing a Malaysian airliner over Ukraine and his K.G.B. has not only been trying to take a bite out of Ukraine but are nibbling on Estonia, Georgia and Moldova, all under the guise of protecting "Russian speakers."

I opposed NATO expansion because I believed that there are few global problems that we can solve without the help of Russia. By expanding NATO at the end of the Cold War, when Russia was weak, we helped to cultivate a politics there that would one day be very receptive to Putin's message that the West is ganging up on Russia. But, that said, the message is a lie. The West has no intention of bringing Ukraine into NATO. And please raise your hand if you think the European Union plans to invade Russia.

Yet Putin just exploits these fears for two reasons. First, he has a huge chip on his shoulder — no, excuse me; he has a whole lumberyard there — of resentment that Russia is no longer the global power it once was. But rather than make Russia great again by tapping its creative people — empowering them with education, the rule of law and consensual politics to realize their full potential — he has opted for the shortcut of tapping his oil and gas wells and seizing power from his people.

And instead of creating a Russia that is an example to its neighbors, he relies on the brute force that his oil and gas can still buy him. While he rails against NATO, he is really afraid of European Union expansion — that Ukrainians would rather embrace the E.U. market and democracy rules than their historical ties to Russia because they know that through the E.U. they can realize potentials that would never be possible with Russia.

By seizing Crimea and stoking up nationalism, Putin was not protecting Russia from NATO. He was protecting himself from the viruses of E.U. accountability and transparency, which, if they took hold in Ukraine, could spread to Moscow, undermining his kleptocracy.

Normally, I wouldn't care, but when the world is dividing between zones of order and disorder, and the world of order needs to be collaborating to stem and reverse disorder, the fact that Putin is stoking disorder on Russia's borders, and not collaborating to promote order in the Middle East, is a real problem. What's more worrying is that the country he threatens most is Russia. If things go bad there — and its economy is already sagging under Western sanctions — the world of disorder will get a lot bigger.

That is why Putin's leadership matters, and so does the pope's. I'm focused on Putin because I think he is making the world a worse place for bad reasons, when he could make a difference in Europe and the Middle East with just an ounce more decency and collaboration. America, too, has plenty to learn from the pope's humility, but say what you will, we're still focused on trying to strengthen the global commons, whether by protecting people from jihadists in Iraq or fighting Ebola in Africa. We could do more. Putin needs to do a lot more.

"The best leaders don't set timid and selfish goals that are easy to meet but instead set bold and inclusive goals that are hard to achieve," remarked Timothy Shriver, the chairman of Special Olympics, who has just written a book on leadership, "Fully Alive: Discovering What Matters Most." "We're all looking for ways to make sense of a world without a center, but we'll only find that in people who lead with authentic humility and reckless generosity."

(Only) Two Rules For A Good Diet

By Mark Bittman

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO — To a large extent, you can fix the food system in your world today. Three entities are involved in creating our food choices: business (everything from farmers to PepsiCo), government (elected and appointed officials and their respective organizations) and the one with the greatest leverage, the one that you control: you.

We shouldn't discount small farms and businesses, nor should we ignore relatively minor officials like the mayor of El Monte, Calif., who tried (and failed) to establish a soda tax to benefit public health. We do not always know where real change will come from, and certainly smaller operations may be more innovative and show us the way.

But for the most part we know where real change doesn't come from: Big Food, the corporations that supply most of the food and stuff masquerading as food that's sold in supermarkets, as fast food and in casual dining chains; and government, especially the federal government, which is beholden to and entranced by big business. Nothing new here.

There often seem to be more happy exceptions in industry than in government. If you look at the relatively new companies that have blazed a path for the food industry, you see, among others, Whole Foods and Chipotle. One demonstrated that supermarkets could sell better ingredients; the other opened the door to non-junkie fast food.

Neither is above criticism, and it's possible both will be surpassed within a few years by newcomers with fresher and better ways of doing things. Still, it's comforting to know that at least somewhere in the corners of this food system, market competition is giving opportunities to clever and even well-intentioned people to figure out how to make real money by actually providing the public with better food.

I'm especially impressed with the way Whole Foods is innovating in the arena of labeling, gradually extending its own internal labeling system from fish to meats and now to fruits and vegetables. (As I said, though, they're hardly above criticism.) Marketing is of course part of it, but shoppers who want to talk back to the supply chain by knowing where their food comes from don't otherwise have a way to do that.

If Whole Foods gives them what they want, then despite the “Whole Paycheck” nickname (and there’s some evidence that Whole Foods is starting to compete on price as well), those who can get there and afford it will favor it. This is progress, doing well by doing at least some good, and that can’t be said about most corporations involved in food. See, for example, the too-little-too-late attempt at transparency by McDonald’s.

We can’t rely on even well-intentioned souls in industry, but given the ball-dropping entity that is supposed to be vigilant regarding our health and welfare — the federal government — we have little choice. The legislative branch isn’t worth discussing, and leadership from the executive branch has been disappointing. Two issues could have been improved definitively in the last six years — the marketing of junk to kids and the existence of antibiotics in our food supply — and President Obama has accomplished little in either case. However stymied he may have been, we are looking at a landscape that hasn’t changed much, the exception being the improved but still hotly contested school food programs supported by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act.

Even worse are the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, the last of which refuses to ban the routine use of antibiotics in animal production despite knowing that a ban is possible and desirable. It’s also dawdling on mandating an improved nutrition label on packaged food, probably because of industry taking “interest.”

We shouldn’t need to rely on Whole Foods for good labeling. Yet every day I’m asked, “How do I know that what I’m buying is O.K.?” It seems the better educated and more concerned people are about this, the more confused they are. Drill deep enough and the list to worry about becomes overwhelming: organics, genetically modified organisms, carbon footprint, packaging, fair trade, waste, labor, animal welfare and for all I know the quality of the water that’s being used to wash your organic greens.

I get this. I’m a worrier, too, though I tend to expend my neurotic energy on different topics. The overall environment means that you’re pretty much on your own if you try to eat healthfully in spite of the system, and you must take up that battle through a dozen or more decisions each day. But there are two big decisions that can put you on the right path and help you largely steer clear of antibiotics, excess sugar, unwanted chemicals, animal cruelty, and more.

Here then, is your two-step guide for an unassailably powerful personal food policy.

1. Stop eating junk and hyperprocessed food. This eliminates probably 80 percent of the stuff that is being sold as “food.”

2. Eat more plants than you did yesterday, or last year.

If you add “Cook your own food” to this list, it’s even more powerful, but these two steps alone allow you to reduce the amount of antibiotics you’re consuming; pretty much eliminate GMOs from your diet, lighten your carbon footprint; reduce your chances of becoming ill as a result of your diet; save money; cut way back on sugar, other junk and unnecessary and potentially harmful nonfood additives; and so on.

All without relying on corporate benevolence or the government getting things right. The power lies with you.

Would Stronger Parties Mean Less Polarization?

By Thomas B. Edsall

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Ever since they emerged in the early 1800s, political parties have been a target of public scorn. But they have always had their defenders — a smaller, less influential camp that holds that parties are more beneficial than harmful because they play an essential role in mediating political disputes.

The anti-party forces fitfully succeed in enacting laws and rules to restrain party organizations and bosses, including the adoption of referendum and recall procedures; requirements that states pick delegates to the national conventions through primaries and caucuses; bans on closed-door meetings; the prohibition of legislative earmarks; and legislation that restricts the size and source of contributions to the national political parties.

The intensity of polarized politics at every level of government now puts the dispute over political parties at the center of a debate among office holders, political scientists, legal experts and partisan activists. Is it possible that strengthening the parties could lessen polarization?

The pro-party camp contends that many reforms have unintentionally fostered polarization: diminishing the clout of parties and party leaders undermines their role as a force for moderation and compromise.

Nathaniel Persily, a professor of law at Stanford, is a proponent of strong, well-financed parties. Polarization, he wrote in an email to me, “is a cost of many of these good government reforms. It is almost an intended cost if you think about it.” Why? Persily argues that the purpose of

In “Strengthening Parties,” a chapter in the forthcoming volume “Solutions to Political Polarization in America,” Persily contends that in the case of campaign finance, “the good good-government reforms that have been tried have, if anything, made things worse.”

The claim that reforms have made things worse is based on the interaction between the 2002 McCain-Feingold Act, which regulated campaign finance, and two 2010 court decisions, the Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United* and the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit decision *Speechnow.org v. F.E.C.*

The McCain-Feingold Act prohibited political parties from accepting unlimited contributions from corporations, unions and rich people, which had come to be called “soft money.”

The federal court decisions, in contrast, explicitly allowed independent political groups – including both super PACs and politically active nonprofits – to accept all forms of soft money.

Pro-party advocates argue that McCain-Feingold in particular has undermined political parties, while court rulings have empowered donors and independent committees, many of whom have agendas more polarizing than those of the parties.

At a Bipartisan Policy Center conference in Washington earlier this month organized to explore the current campaign finance situation, Ray La Raja, a political scientist at the University of Massachusetts, made a case, like Persily, in support of political parties:

La Raja, who has been working with Brian F. Schaffner, another UMass political scientist, presented slides comparing states that limit contributions to political parties with states without such limits. In the states without limits, a much higher proportion of the total contributions to candidates, especially to centrist-moderate candidates, comes from the parties than it does in states with limits. In addition, the degree of ideological polarization between Republicans and Democrats in legislatures in states without limits is substantially lower than it is in states with limits, as Figure 1 demonstrates.

Thomas E. Mann, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who is a strong supporter of McCain-Feingold, disagrees with Persily and La Raja. At the conference, and in later email exchanges, Mann made a number of key points.

First of all, Mann contends, Republicans are the driving force behind polarization. Their opposition to Democratic proposals is based less on ideological principle than on a strategic political decision to oppose President Obama on every front, even when he takes a position previously advocated by

conservatives. Examples of the latter include the individual mandate under Obamacare and end-of-life counseling.

“Much of the acrimony and gridlock is not a consequence” of ideological issues or campaign finance, Mann told participants at the conference. Instead, he argues, “it’s strategic – it’s all about capturing a majority in the House and Senate, and the White House.”

According to Mann,

Michael Barber, a political scientist at Brigham Young University who supports strong political parties, provided evidence to the conference that altering campaign finance laws has significant costs and benefits — trade-offs in every direction.

Barber presented slides that showed that individual contributors to candidates are strikingly ideological and partisan, thus fueling polarization. That is, contributions from traditional PACs, which give relatively small amounts directly to candidates, are focused on the goal of gaining access, and thus are far more politically centrist (Figure 2).

In a working paper on the impact that campaign finance regulation has on state elected officials, Barber found that “legislators who raise more money from individuals are more likely to be ideologically extreme,” while “higher limits on contributions from PACs yield more ideologically moderate legislators.”

One interpretation of Barber’s findings is that a reduction in the number of contributions from individual donors, including small donors, would diminish ideological conflict. This would mean, in effect, abandoning the long-sought goal of increasing participation in the campaign finance process. Conversely, by this reasoning, advocates of increased participation by small donors will have to tolerate exacerbated polarization and gridlock if they are successful.

I asked Barber in an email about these conflicts, and he wrote that

Not an attractive option for either side. Reformers and party loyalists both face what Persily describes as “a devil’s choice.”

McCain-Feingold does appear to have contributed to a decline in Republican Party fund-raising, and to the end of rising cash totals for Democratic Party committees. According to the Campaign Finance Institute, Democratic Party fund-raising grew from \$229.8 million in 1992 to \$626.5 million in 2000, the last presidential election year in which soft money contributions were permitted. Since then, Democratic totals have remained virtually level, reaching \$631.1 million in 2012 (all these figures are adjusted for inflation).

On the Republican side, the post-McCain-Feingold election years have produced a substantial decline in donations, which fell to \$697.7 million in 2012 from \$815.3 million in 2000.

But insofar as the parties are struggling, it is far more the result of court rulings that have led to an explosion of outside spending, which, in key battleground contests in the current election cycle, often eclipses spending by the parties.

Experts who are at the heart of these developments argue that the courts over the past four years have tipped the balance in favor of independent political committees. Bob Bauer, a prominent Democratic campaign finance lawyer who spoke at the Washington conference, noted that “there are enormous differences between parties and outside groups,” but the legal system now “privileges the groups.”

The result is a distorted balance of financial and political power with the least accountable organizations gaining the most leverage over our campaigns. And yet, as we try to fix that problem and to address the general disrepute into which American politics has fallen, we have to think hard about how the unintended consequences of prior efforts at reform have helped to bring us where we are now.

A Nuclear Deal, Now Or Never

By Vali R. Nasr

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

WASHINGTON — Like it or not, the calendar of voting — here and in Iran — is driving the negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. A first, easy prediction: Don't expect progress in the few days that remain until America's Election Day. But then the tempo could ratchet up quickly. And it had better, if we are to expect a nuclear deal at all.

The clock begins ticking on Election Day because Nov. 24 is the target date for a comprehensive agreement. But until the next Congress is chosen on Nov. 4, the Americans can't make politically risky promises and the Iranians can't react, not knowing where the balance of power between Republicans and Democrats will lie.

Slightly more than a year from now, Iran will hold its own elections, which will ultimately decide who its next top leader will be. Given that the current supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has set the balance of power between reformists and hard-liners, that choice could well change the direction of Iranian policy making on any potential deal for a very long time.

These storm clouds will narrow the diplomats' room to maneuver as each election approaches. But they will also part long enough, between election seasons, to perhaps allow for dramatic new proposals and agreements. It is a complicated game: The elections affect the talks, and the rate of progress in the talks determines how voters feel. Each side must calculate not just how a final deal would resonate at home, but also when it would strengthen the hand of its most desired partner on the other side.

Here is how this interwoven calendar is likely to play out:

2014: The United States pegged the negotiations to its political calendar when it fixed the deadline for a final deal after next month's election. The calculation assumed that once the next Congress's makeup was known, Iranian negotiators who sought a deal would be eager to consummate one in plenty of time to show voters a rising economy, based on sanctions relief. If the Republicans do as well as expected, the Obama administration would also want to consolidate a deal quickly, before the new Congress meets in January. In theory, then, the best chance for a deal is in the next few months, when both sides' political motivations converge.

But there is a big problem: The sides remain far apart. The United States and its partners insist that Iran cut its enrichment capability enough to preclude a rapid breakout toward producing a nuclear weapon; Iran refuses to consider any cut that could seem to dismantle its nuclear program. Iran also seeks full and immediate relief from economic sanctions; its opponents reject that as imprudent and impractical. Any deal would require both sides to compromise. And even a signed deal would be attacked by hard-liners in both countries, especially if President Obama bypassed Congress and suspended most sanctions on his own. Iran would be skeptical, since the next president could restore them.

Does that mean a quick deal is not in the cards, forcing the talks to be extended well into next year? Not necessarily — even if the Republicans win big next month. In that case, Iran would question whether the next Congress would go along with any sanctions relief. And the weaker the Obama administration looked to Iranian negotiators, the more they would ask for broader sanctions relief up front.

That would in turn make it more difficult for the administration to sell such an agreement to the current Congress — unless, of course, the Iranians significantly changed course on their demands to keep their enrichment program. So a big Republican win would only increase pressure on Mr. Obama and Iran to settle now or never.

The other option — reset the clock and hope for a solid deal to emerge more slowly — is a poorer bet. The reason lies in the next election cycle.

2015: In December 2015, Iran will elect a new Parliament. Within months, voters will also choose a Council of Experts, who in turn will pick the next supreme religious leader. Knowing how large those stakes are, Iran's negotiators already have their eyes on those elections. So should the American negotiators, because the date of any agreement could decide them.

At the moment, Parliament is controlled by hard-liners. To change that, President Hassan Rouhani needs the economic benefits that a nuclear deal can bring. And he needs them soon, if they are to impress voters. In other words, the longer it takes to get a deal, the less likely it is that it can help Mr. Rouhani. Iran's conservatives know that: If a deal is reached at all, they want it later rather than sooner.

Put that calendar together, and a strategy for America is clear. While the United States and its allies must achieve their core goals — effectively and dependably blocking Iran's path to a nuclear bomb — in any compromises they make, they need to remember, too, that getting a deal itself could be a game-changer in Iranian politics. The bet they should be making is on offering one while they still can; their counterparts are, after all, Iranian politicians whose interests lie in both achieving a nuclear deal and opening up their country. If the talks don't bear fruit soon, our narrow window of opportunity will shut, and the West will most likely have to contend with a far more recalcitrant Iran in an unstable Middle East.

The Iranian hard-liners are betting that a turn to the right in America would sink the talks, and that an end to talks would hand them a long-term victory in Iran. So even if Congress turns further rightward, we need to quicken the negotiations and achieve a deal as soon as possible. The longer it takes, the more likely it is that politics here and in Iran will ultimately coalesce to sink any deal at all.

Vali R. Nasr, the dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, is the author of "The Dispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in Retreat."

Russia Today, Argentina Tomorrow

By Fabián Bosoer And Federico Finchelstein

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

Earlier this month, the president of Russia, Vladimir V. Putin, and the president of Argentina, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, took part in a video conference to celebrate a new television partnership. Under the terms of the deal, the Russian-owned channel RT (formerly known as Russia Today) will soon begin broadcasting Spanish-language news in Argentina. Mrs. Kirchner hailed the development as a means for Argentines "to understand the real Russia," as well as to help Russians learn about "the real Argentina, unlike the way the international media and the so-called national media portray us."

Buenos Aires currently enjoys warm relations with Moscow for a variety of reasons. Argentina is looking to Russia for help in upgrading its energy sector, including a possible partnership with the Russian giant Gazprom to develop oil and shale gas production in Argentina.

The cooperation extends to diplomatic relations, too. Argentina has backed Russia's position on Ukraine, while Mr. Putin has offered political support in Argentina's international legal dispute with so-called vulture funds over the value of defaulted government bonds.

Evident in the TV deal, though, was a more disturbing convergence between the two states: a shared vision of the role that the mass media should play in the government and public life of the nation. "We are achieving a communication without intermediaries," said Mrs. Kirchner, "in order to transmit our own values." This approach was echoed by Mr. Putin, who spoke of an expanding electronic media environment as "a formidable weapon that enables public opinion manipulations."

The Spanish version of RT is intended as an antidote to the toxic influence of foreign media channels “that transmit news based on their interests,” as Mrs. Kirchner put it. The Spanish-language RT deal mirrors the Venezuelan-Argentine venture in the public news channel Telesur, in which Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Ecuador and Uruguay also have minority stakes. Like Telesur, RT is presented not merely as an option in a pluralistic media landscape, but as the channel representing the true national cultures of each country in which it broadcasts.

From Ecuador to Venezuela, the conflation of state media, private media ownership by politicians and their cronies and party propaganda has been a prominent aspect of Latin American populism during its first decade of ascendancy. As the recent re-election of President Evo Morales in Bolivia shows, these populist leaders continue to enjoy broad support. But in Bolivia, as elsewhere in Latin America, these leaders have also manufactured their support by co-opting the power of state media and by marginalizing more critical elements of the independent media.

In Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, the typical strategy is to use antitrust laws to force commercial media groups to break up and sell off assets, which are then acquired by pro-government investors. For example, just days before Argentina’s deal with RT became public, the government agency assigned to enforce the country’s new media law announced that it would seek to dismember the audiovisual arm of the Clarín media group (which also publishes Argentina’s principal newspaper of the same name, where one of us works as a journalist).

In Venezuela, the influential opposition newspaper Tal Cual, edited by the veteran left-wing politician Teodoro Petkoff, has announced its imminent closure — a situation described by the Inter-American Press Association as symptomatic of “the siege on the critical or independent press in Venezuela,” where almost all TV channels and radio stations have come under government control. In Ecuador, after the newspaper Hoy was forced into partial closure when the government imposed an advertising boycott, its director attacked the country’s new media law for “criminalizing journalistic work.”

The populist rhetoric against critical newspapers and journalists is that they must be penalized as part of a struggle against the “economic interests” of private owners that are opposed to the common good. The roots of such populism can be traced to widespread grievances about the failures of the “Washington consensus,” which made the continent a laboratory for neoliberal economics and imposed considerable hardships. With charismatic leadership, populism has proved remarkably successful in electoral terms. But there is a difference between winning elections and a truly democratic culture, and Latin America’s populist leaders have amassed enormous power even as they expanded social rights.

The increasingly harsh media policy does not alone explain populism’s success, but it certainly helps promote its case. Among Argentina, Venezuela and Ecuador, there are important distinctions in the style and character of state interference with press freedom, but all of these populist administrations have harassed independent journalists. And in all of these countries, there has been a consolidation of what is, in effect, state propaganda.

To be sure, the anti-populist opposition used similar authoritarian tactics in the past — and might still do so, if permitted. But the populists have made this merger of state media and party messaging an essential condition for their rule of these democratic societies.

In its first decade, Latin American populism stressed the value of the state as the protector of the most excluded sectors of society and as the promoter of their interests. There have been major progressive achievements, reversing a legacy of social inequality. But as it moves into its second decade in power, populism seems engaged in a campaign to degrade independent journalism. Does Latin America really wish to emulate Mr. Putin’s approach to media freedom?

Fabián Bosoer is an opinion editor at the Argentine newspaper Clarín. Federico Finchelstein is the chairman of the history department at the New School for Social Research.

Brazilians Are Shocked, Shocked At Corruption!

By Antonio Prata

[New York Times](#), October 22, 2014

We Brazilians suffer from a curious cognitive dysfunction, which occurs with the same frequency in our population as lactose intolerance does among the Japanese, or the inclination for punning among the English. We have the ability to be outraged by corruption, while engaging in our own petty versions of it.

As the second round of presidential voting approaches on Sunday, this evil is spreading like an epidemic. In bars, on the streets and on social networks, advocates of Dilma Rousseff, the Workers Party candidate for re-election, and Senator Aécio Neves, of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party, never tire of reminding us of the “robberies” that their rivals commit.

Workers Party supporters cite the re-election scandal in which Social Democrats were accused of bribing congressmen to approve a constitutional amendment allowing Fernando Henrique Cardoso to compete again for the presidency in 1998. Social Democrats’ supporters mention the “Mensalão,” a case in which congressmen allied with the Workers Party regularly received money diverted from Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s illegal campaign contributions. Those not involved in the party squabbles tend to blame all the politicians, as if the politicians were a separate species, able to corrupt our reputable citizens.

Our citizens don’t really need the help.

My introduction to Brazilians’ cavalier attitude toward corruption came through family. When I was about 7 years old, we went to a Sunday lunch at my uncle Arthur’s. Arthur (not his real name) was my richest uncle, and he lived in a house with a pool. During lunch, he proudly told our family he had found a way to turn off the water register in front of the house and could now fill his pool for free. I do not remember any member of my family reprimanding him.

Today, my uncle is retired, and he sends me angry emails about the corruption in the Workers Party government.

I would like to believe that the country’s advancements in recent decades have made us more ethical, but that is not the case. A friend of mine, a lawyer in her 30s, has a hairdresser’s license so she can get discounts on shampoo. She is a partner in a tax law firm and earns enough in a year to pay for shampoo for three future generations of her family.

A psychoanalyst whom I consulted years ago proposed to charge me less if I paid for my sessions in cash, thus allowing him to bypass the tax authorities.

In Rio de Janeiro, when you ask a taxi driver for a receipt, the usual response is, “What value do you want me to put in?” The reason being, the driver can give you a receipt with an inflated charge that allows you to steal 10 or 20 reais from your employer. Of course, in return for this “favor,” he expects a small percentage in cash.

Even when we go to the movies, Brazilians find a way to bend the rules — if there is a line we will look for a friend who is in a better position and think nothing of jumping ahead. But on Facebook and Twitter, the two parties, or politicians in general, clearly are to blame for all our adversities.

Sure there have been advances in the 20 years that the parties have been in power. Under Mr. Cardoso (1995-2003), hyperinflation ended, the Brazilian real was strengthened, and the economy improved. Mr. da Silva (2003-2011) and Ms. Rousseff (2011 to date) deepened and extended social programs that have lifted more than 40 million people out of poverty. These advances, however, were

made without putting an end to old problems: spurious alliances to obtain the majority in Congress, the exchange of favors, cronyism and corruption. These are traces of a country that emerged 514 years ago as Portugal's overseas pantry, where men were making money far from the law, the church and their wives — first, by exploiting pau brasil (a red tree whose sap was used to dye fabrics and that lent its name to our country), and after that by planting sugar cane, trafficking in slaves, and mining for gold and gems. Much of the disregard for consequences and of the expediency practiced by these explorers still exists today.

Am I the only Brazilian free of these traits? Of course not! Last year, I bought a refrigerator. The store said that, in addition to the delivery, they could install it for 450 reais. I thought that was expensive, and said I would do it myself. When the fridge arrived, however, I realized I couldn't handle it.

The delivery man coughed and proposed: "If you want it, I can install it now, for 100 reais, but the people from the store cannot find out."

"Sure," I nodded. Uncle Arthur would have been proud of me.

The other day, looking at that fridge, I realized that it is an image of today's Brazil: powerful, showy, forward-looking, but working on the old connections we insist on perpetuating. President Rousseff or Senator Neves will win the election, but it will take longer to solve the problems that hold back Brazil from being a great country.

Antonio Prata is a columnist for the newspaper Folha de São Paulo.

The Dirty Effects Of Mountaintop Removal Mining

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

FOR DECADES, coal companies have been removing mountain peaks to haul away coal lying just underneath. More recently, scientists and regulators have been developing a clearer understanding of the environmental consequences. They aren't pretty.

In the 1990s, coal miners began using large equipment to strip away mountaintops in states such as West Virginia. The technique made it economical for them to extract more coal from troublesome seams in the rock, which might be too small for traditional mining or lodged in unstable formations. Environmentalists were appalled, but the practice spread and now accounts for more than 40 percent of West Virginia coal production.

Burning coal has a host of drawbacks: It produces both planet-warming carbon dioxide and deadly conventional air pollutants. Removing layers of mountaintop in the extraction process aggravates the damage. The displaced earth must go somewhere, typically into adjoining valleys, affecting the streams that run through them. The dust that's blown into the air on mountaintop removal sites, meanwhile, is suspected to be unhealthy for mine workers and nearby communities.

Scientists have recently produced evidence backing up both concerns. Over the summer, a U.S. Geological Survey study compared streams near mountaintop removal operations to streams farther away. In what should be "a global hotspot for fish biodiversity," according to Nathaniel Hitt, one of the authors, the researchers found decimated fish populations, with untold consequences for downstream river systems. The scientists noted changes in stream chemistry: Salts from the disturbed earth appear to have dissolved in the water, which may well have disrupted the food chain.

Last week, the Charleston Gazette reported on a new study finding that dust from mountaintop removal mining appears to contribute to greater risk of lung cancer. West Virginia University researchers took dust samples from several towns near mountaintop removal sites and tested them on lung cells,

which changed for the worse. The findings fit into a larger, hazardous picture: People living near these sites experience higher rates of cancer and birth defects.

With these sorts of problems in mind, the Environmental Protection Agency is taking a more skeptical look at mountaintop removal mining permits. The Clean Water Act gives the government wide authority over industrial operations that change rivers and streams. The EPA has already used it to revoke a permit from a controversial proposed mountaintop removal mine in Logan County, W.Va. The agency has also instructed its branch offices to be more careful about mountaintop removal projects that could change nearby water chemistry.

The coal industry and its allies are howling. Skeptics of mountaintop removal, one industry pamphlet insisted, “promote an anti-coal, anti-business agenda that uses environmental issues as a mere pawn to redistribute wealth, grab power, and put forth liberal, social ideology.” The GOP-controlled House passed a bill that would strip the EPA of some of its permitting power. But just this month the Obama administration once again prevailed in court, beating back another industry challenge.

The emerging scientific evidence should cut through the rhetoric. The EPA is right to move more firmly to protect health and environment.

On Marijuana Legalization Plans, The District Should Slow Down

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

MOST VOTES have yet to be cast in the District’s referendum on legalizing marijuana, but the D.C. Council is already making plans on how to regulate sales. The premature move is in keeping with the heedless rush to put the city’s imprimatur on use of a drug whose impacts are still not fully known. It is not too late for more prudent judgment to prevail; voters on Nov. 4 could slow the push for legalization by voting no on Initiative 71.

The ballot initiative to be decided in the Nov. 4 general election would make it lawful for a person 21 years of age or older to possess up to two ounces of marijuana for personal use, to grow up to six plants at home and to transfer without payment up to one ounce of marijuana to another person 21 years or older. Because of the District’s restrictions on what is subject to ballot approval, the initiative would not allow for sale of marijuana, creating a situation where having marijuana would be legal but getting it might require illegal acts.

A joint committee hearing will be held Oct. 30 on legislation to establish a taxation and regulation infrastructure for marijuana production and sale. Vincent B. Orange (D-At Large), chairman of the business and consumer committee that will hold the hearing with the finance committee, said the city needs to be prepared to move forward if the initiative passes, which, based on polls, he believes will be the case, and if Congress doesn’t intervene, about which he won’t hazard a guess.

Much of the District’s debate about Initiative 71 has centered on matters of race and social justice. That was a serious issue when marijuana possession was subject to criminal prosecution and African Americans accounted for an outsize proportion of those arrested. But since decriminalization went into effect in July, possession is now subject to just a \$25 fine, among the lowest in the nation. As The Post’s Marc Fisher recently detailed, some leaders in the African American community worry that legalization would not keep more young blacks out of jail because a more readily available drug could lead young people to harder drugs. “Scratch the surface of most homicides and rape cases, and the perpetrators were high on drugs, including marijuana,” said Arthur Burnett of the National African American Drug Policy Coalition.

We are not in the Reefer Madness school of marijuana prohibition. We favored decriminalization. But the drug can have harmful effects; Its active ingredient has been linked to memory problems, impaired thinking and weakened immune systems. And we question whether it is possible to legalize the drug for adults without sending a message to youth that its use is risk-free.

By waiting, the District would benefit from ongoing scientific research as well as the experience of states that only recently have legalized marijuana. It is easier to let a genie out of the bottle than to try to stuff one back in.

How Ben Bradlee Transformed The Washington Post

By Editorial Board

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

BENJAMIN C. Bradlee, who died Tuesday at the age of 93, was the architect and builder of the modern Washington Post. His conviction that even the most powerful should be held to a standard of truth-telling inspired journalists well beyond The Post. His exuberance at work and in life served as a model well beyond journalism.

As managing editor and then executive editor from 1965 to 1991, Mr. Bradlee liked to roam the sprawling newsroom. Once he came up to a young journalist on the National staff, hired just months before, whose story was on Page One that day. Mr. Bradlee jabbed a finger at the front-page story. “Nothing like this!” he said, with a broad, knowing smile.

There was nothing like working for him, either. His enthusiasm was infectious. When Mr. Bradlee stopped to ask what was going on, reporters eagerly shared a tantalizing idea or tip. “Worth a phone call,” Mr. Bradlee often replied, and he needed say no more. His newsroom crackled with the energy of a modern startup. A certain “creative tension” was the reality, a competition among reporters and editors to win his approval. Mr. Bradlee loved the chase and the thrill of discovery.

Mr. Bradlee called reporters “the best lie detectors,” and nothing mattered more to him than exposing the truth, even if it took a long time. In his own account, the Vietnam War and then Watergate marked a crisis of confidence in American society, brought on by leaders who did not level with the people. In the Pentagon Papers, excerpts of which he published despite government threats, Mr. Bradlee saw proof that the American people had not been told the truth about decisions made to escalate the war. Then came Watergate and his determination to find out what really happened. He was outraged at President Nixon’s behavior. Nixon “lied over and over again with intent to deceive the American public and thereby save his ass from the consequences of his crimes,” Mr. Bradlee wrote in his memoir. The newspaper won global recognition for coverage that led to the president’s resignation, but the lesson for journalists was in Mr. Bradlee’s fusion of doggedness, fearlessness and professionalism.

His management could be erratic, and he made mistakes, but Mr. Bradlee never tired of looking for the finest talent, both established and upcoming. Early on he lured David S. Broder from the New York Times and Haynes Johnson from the Washington Evening Star. They helped define the era. “The more we found, the hungrier we got,” he recalled. He invented the Style section, capturing in the newspaper the magic of the “New Journalism” then popular in magazines — provocative, literary, probing, sassy and swashbuckling. He was impatient with mediocrity and flackery. He relished stylish writing and reporters who were fast off the mark.

What Mr. Bradlee built at The Post could not have been achieved without the support of the Graham family, which invested generously in his ambitions and courageously stood behind his editorial decisions. Katharine Graham named Mr. Bradlee managing editor in 1965, and their partnership and shared vision

spanned a generation of growth in the newspaper's stature and profitability. Donald E. Graham, who did so much to lead the newspaper in the next generation, never forgot Mr. Bradlee's contribution. As he said at his retirement in 1991, "It's Bradlee's paper."

Ben Bradlee, A Hero To The Post Newsroom

By Donald Graham

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

In the next few days you will hear real sadness from hundreds of people who work or used to work at The Post. I would like to tell you why we all loved Ben Bradlee so much — loved working for him, loved working with him — and why we felt he could make anything possible.

When my mother, Katharine Graham, picked Ben to be managing editor of The Post in 1965 and then executive editor in 1968 — her first significant action as publisher — the two of them held huge ambitions for the paper. Ben's ambition had taught him one thing: He had to work hard. "I knew it would take thousands of extra hours to begin to know what to do." But he had borne plenty of responsibility early in his life (he served as a officer on a destroyer in the Pacific in World War II), and as he wrote later: "I was aching to do it."

As he settled in, Kay Graham was watching. Never sure of herself and prone to second-guessing her judgment, she knew she had made the perfect choice. "He's there nights, he's there weekends," she told those around her. "And you should see the people he's hiring."

That was what Ben concentrated on: hiring. "There was so much I didn't know — about presses, about composing rooms, about budgets," Ben wrote, "that I decided to concentrate on the one thing I did know: good reporters."

They were good, and they were tough. Among his first hires were Richard Harwood, who had lost a lung in the invasion of Tarawa in 1943, and Ward Just, who would later be wounded in Vietnam. David Broder was another crucial early hire.

Bradlee roamed the building, prodding the production and advertising departments as well as the newsroom. He wanted to make things much better — now. He wasn't always right, but he helped Kay get a far better understanding of where the Post's problems lay.

It was perfect preparation for the paper's watershed moment: the 1971 decision to print the stories based on the Pentagon Papers. The New York Times had spent months preparing a series of stories based on these top-secret documents, but it was enjoined by a federal court from printing more after the first ones appeared. One day after the injunction was issued, Daniel Ellsberg gave the papers to The Post. Bradlee and his team were pushing hard to print their story the following day. But every lawyer in the place was opposed.

Ben knew the next step, the only step that would give Kay the confidence she needed to publish. Without authorization, he called a greater lawyer, his friend Edward Bennett Williams. They had met when Ben was a Post reporter covering the U.S. District Court in Washington and Ed was flamboyantly winning cases and building his reputation. Summoned by a note begging him to ask for a recess in a Chicago trial and call Bradlee, the football-loving Williams heard the story and said, "Christ, Benjy, you're behind 28-0, and it's the fourth quarter. You've got to print."

Williams, at the time, didn't represent The Post. But facing supremely high stakes (among other things, the Washington Post Co. was going public that week; there had also been a clear threat made to our television-station licenses), Kay decided to print the story. Days later, the Supreme Court ruled that the newspapers could not be prevented from doing so.

The outcome of the Pentagon Papers case bred a perfect confidence between editor and publisher. When the Watergate stories came along, there was unhesitating support for the newsroom's work. As Kay put it later, "He set the ground rules — pushing, pushing, pushing, not so subtly asking everyone to take one more step, relentlessly pursuing the story in the face of persistent accusations against us, and a concerted campaign of intimidation."

Usually, Ben told her in advance when a big story was breaking. Once during Watergate, he did not. When reporter Carl Bernstein called Attorney General John Mitchell to ask about his control of a secret fund used to gather information on the Democrats, Mitchell exploded. "Katie Graham's going to get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that's published." Ben didn't get around to calling his publisher. After the story ran, he told her, "That was too good to check with you, Katharine."

Through big stories and small — the Pentagon Papers and Watergate were only the beginning of it — those tough reporters on Ben's staff came to know they were working for someone great. You could safely call the Post newsroom staff hard-bitten. They were men and women who had no heroes. But he was their hero.

It went both ways. In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision on the Pentagon Papers, here's what he said to the newsroom: "The guts and energy and responsibility of everyone involved in this fight, and the sense that you were all involved, has impressed me more than anything in my life. You were beautiful."

You too, Benjy.

Ben Bradlee Was A Leader And A Friend

By Richard Cohen

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Ben Bradlee would not have liked me to say so, but he was the living refutation of the Declaration of Independence: All men are not created equal. Certainly, he was not. He was born rich and well-connected, a member of the WASP tribe that once ran much of America and nearly all of its prestigious institutions. He was compellingly handsome and so smart that no crossword puzzle could really challenge him. It's not that he didn't have a weakness. He did. He was a sucker for the underdog.

If you could not be Ben Bradlee, then the next best thing was to be his friend. This was my unbounded good luck, and I watched him, always taking mental notes just to be a touch like him. I used to come into The Post's newsroom early, and so did Bradlee. We would talk in the empty newsroom, going over the news and some gossip, and this is how I learned the answer to the question so many people had: What were his politics? Surely, he was a liberal. When asked, I would shake my head no.

Bradlee believed only in fairness — that and a bespoke Anglican God with a Back Bay accent. He would bridle at the efforts of the rich, the connected and, especially, their children to steal in the ways the rich always have, through investments and control of institutions. "What is it with you, Bradlee?" I once asked him. "Why do you like to poke your finger into the eye of your own people?" He laughed. "I don't know. But I do."

He had another belief. As an editor, he believed in the story. Was it true? Was it good? Was it great? Watergate was both true and great and, really, he bet his career on the work of two young reporters, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. That is well-known — a book, a movie, more books, even more movies.

Less known is that powerful people would call and complain about this or that article and Bradlee, with a lethal insouciance, would essentially say that the facts were the facts. I can't say he never killed a story (nothing important, that I know of), but the most chilling boasts of the powerful — "I can get that

story killed” or “I know Ben Bradlee” — were never heard in Washington. If they really knew Bradlee, they knew their demands would be counterproductive. Threaten and the story would surely run. Hemingway, another newsman, popularized the phrase “grace under pressure.” It applied to Bradlee. It was another way of saying guts.

That, in short, is the way he ran The Post. The story — in other words, the reader — was everything. When he retired, a Post reporter prepared a story about him. It was too heavy with references to Bradlee as a Georgetown grandee, a martini-swirling socialite. Bradlee was offended by the story. He was a great American newspaper editor — maybe the greatest — and a World War II veteran as well. His Georgetown house was beside the point. He showed me the story. I was appalled, but Bradlee would not intervene. Later, a senior editor modified the piece.

I got an email the other day saying that a column of mine had received 955 comments by 8 a.m. That’s my world now, but it was never Bradlee’s. He did not edit by the numbers, giving the readers more of what they already had. There was no such thing as “trending” for him. He edited by instinct, by experience, by his gut. He led. He did not follow, and when he retired the entire newsroom rose as one — a football field of talent Bradlee had assembled — and applauded. I was coming toward him as he walked out with his wife, Sally Quinn. Our eyes met. His had a tear in it.

The word charismatic gets abused a lot, sometimes applied to politicians who get 51 percent of the vote. But Bradlee was the genuine article. Men were drawn to him, women, too, but that was a different matter. It’s easy and sometimes squalid to be a ladies’ man — not that Bradlee chose to be — but harder and rarer to be a leader of men, the kind of man whom other men both envy and follow. Bradlee had that quality, and he knew it, and when I mentioned it to him once, he said in that growly voice of his, “Eat your heart out, Cohen.” I never did. It was simply too much fun just being with him.

Read more from Richard Cohen’s archive.

Bears And Wolves Find A Voice In The Wilderness

By Kathleen Parker

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

If politicians preying upon your attentions this season fail to inspire, you might seek common cause with the beasts — the four-legged variety rather than those running for office.

Ballot initiatives aimed at protecting bears and wolves from hounding, trapping and other inhumane hunting practices are up for a vote in two states — Maine and Michigan.

Oh, be still thy twitching trigger finger. This isn’t an anti-hunting column; it’s a pro-humanity column. Ours. And the referendums, driven by the Humane Society of the United States, are aimed only at minimizing animal suffering and restoring a measure of decency and fair play in our dealings with creatures.

First the bears. Maine is the only state that still allows bear baiting, hounding and trapping. More than half of the 32 states with legal bear hunting allow hounding, a dozen allow baiting, and only Maine allows trapping for sport.

For clarification, hounding refers to the use of dogs that have been trained to chase bears relentlessly and then to corner or fight the poor beast. The bears have no choice but to turn to face a murderous pack or, exhausted, escape up a tree.

That’s when the hunter, who, thanks to electronic tracking equipment, has been able to follow at a leisurely pace and safe distance, points his rifle and shoots the bear from a tree limb. Frances Macomber, the cowardly hunter of Hemingway’s short, unhappy story, looks like a Maasai warrior by comparison.

Baiting means that a hunting guide strews rotting food in the woods and places a 55-gallon drum filled with jelly doughnuts, pizza, grease, fish guts and rotting beaver carcasses in a target spot. The “hunter,” who likely has paid a fee to the “guide” for a “guaranteed kill,” is provided a comfy seat to wait for the bear. Bam!

It’s ironic — or something — that the same state fish and wildlife agency folks who post signs warning tourists not to feed the bears will allow other tourists to feed them for about \$2,000 to \$4,000 a pop. New signage might read: Kill what you feed.

The problem with baiting, beyond the obvious, is that it perpetuates an unhealthy cycle that only creates more problems — growing the bear population and making the bruins too comfortable around human areas — that hunters then use to justify more baiting and shooting. Avid hunter and writer Ted Williams, who wrote about bear baiting for Audubon magazine in 2005, calls it “garbaging for bears.”

Other states, such as Colorado, Oregon and Washington, meanwhile, have managed to maintain mostly stable bear populations without these inhumane practices. Plus, bear-hunting licenses in these states for fair-chase hunts have doubled or tripled.

A fair hunt may be more dangerous and require greater courage than shooting Winnie in a tree, but isn’t that at least part of the point? It should be noted that the Maasai warrior, who carries a shield and a spear to hunt a lion, does sometimes lose.

In Michigan, wolves are the designated prey.

The Humane Society is campaigning there to stop the reopening of a wolf hunt, which has been deemed necessary largely because of human-wolf stories that were found to be false. In one true case, a farmer who lost several cattle to wolves had left several rotting cattle carcasses lying around. Talk about a baited field. Was he expecting squirrels?

Otherwise, the stories are mostly myths — wolves staring at humans through windows, stalking little girls in red capes, that sort of thing.

Although wolves have been removed from the endangered species list in Michigan, they number fewer than 650. Humane Society President and chief executive Wayne Pacelle fears that wolves will suffer the inhumane hunting practices — hounds and traps — seen in other states that are part of what he describes as “anti-wolf hysteria sweeping the Midwest.”

Rather than leaving power in the hands of legislators and commissioners, Pacelle is urging voters to speak up through ballot initiatives. “We need to make a statement that the public — and not just trophy hunters — has a right to have a say in the protection of wildlife.”

The referendum, by circumventing heavily lobbied legislators, sought to resonate with people who are disgusted with politics or who abhor cruelty to animals as sport. And, yes, often for food, but that’s a subject for another day. In the meantime, we can safely say that nobody eats wolf. And nobody eats bear — twice.

Read more from Kathleen Parker’s archive, follow her on Twitter or find her on Facebook.

A Small Organization Offers A Fresh Approach On Preventing Terrorism

By David Ignatius

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates

Hedayah certainly doesn’t look like a global counterterrorism center. It sits in a quiet villa on Fatima bint Mubarak Street here. It has a staff of 14. Its annual budget wouldn’t begin to cover the cost of an Apache helicopter gunship.

This tiny international organization, whose Arabic name means “guidance,” wants to be the softer face of the battle against such terror groups as the Islamic State. A brochure explains that if traditional counterterrorism efforts are perceived as soldiers with automatic weapons, Hedayah instead wants an image of kids sitting around a blackboard in a rural school.

Looking at the Middle East today, you’d have to say that the former approach, stressing soldiers with guns, hasn’t been doing very well. Sectarian violence has devoured Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, and it’s gnawing at surrounding nations.

So perhaps it’s time to try the alternative approach of low-visibility groups such as Hedayah, whose 2014 budget was just \$6 million.

Hedayah was created in 2012 by the 29 countries in the Global Counterterrorism Forum, which is chaired by the United States and Turkey. Member nations include many countries whose citizens have funded or exported radicalism, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The motivation was to share ideas, outside of existing intelligence and security partnerships, for “redirection of terrorist support and potential recruits through non-coercive preventive measures.”

The organization doesn’t even describe its mission as counterterrorism. Instead of “CT,” its business is “CVE,” which stands for “countering violent extremism.” The nonsectarian approach extends to describing the office prayer room as the “all religion room.”

Hedayah’s non-coercive approach has unfortunately gotten more lip service than major support from participating nations. It holds meetings and seminars, but with so little money, its activities are limited. Maqsood Kruse, the U.A.E. official who runs the group, says it has accomplished 15 percent of what it could do with more money and attention.

The Hedayah agenda stresses ways to avoid the radicalization process that leads people to embrace terrorism. The idea is prevention, rather than reaction. In the group’s summary of last year’s activities, the first item is “preventing education systems from becoming breeding grounds for violent extremism.” In practical terms, this means stopping the use of madrassas and other religious schools as a training ground for jihadists.

Personally, I think there’s a simple way to check the abuse of Islamic education. Saudi Arabia, whose funding for madrassas in such places as Afghanistan and Pakistan helped create a generation of potential religious warriors, must stop the practice. “No more foreign funding for madrassas” should be a demand of the nations that have joined the coalition against the Islamic State. Hedayah doesn’t propose anything so radical, but it should.

A second priority for Hedayah is de-radicalization and rehabilitation of prisoners. “Prisons are potential terrorist networks,” notes the group, because they have become places where radicals can recruit, indoctrinate and strategize.

Prisons have been especially important for the Islamic State, which freed thousands of well-indoctrinated inmates as it swept through Anbar and Mosul in Iraq. Here, Saudi Arabia provides a positive model: The kingdom has worked over the past decade to turn its al-Qaeda prisoners away from violence.

Two other preventive approaches are also noteworthy. Hedayah tries to encourage victims of terrorism to tell their stories, so that young people will hear a counternarrative to the heroic self-promotion of the jihadists. And it encourages community policing efforts around the world, so that local cops in New York City or Amsterdam or Riyadh will get tips from parents, friends or imams when young people become radicalized.

Hedayah’s final goal involves using social media to combat extremism. This may be the most important mission, given the mastery that the Islamic State has shown in using the Internet to promote

violent confrontation. Over the past decade, this virtual battle against extremism has typically been waged by secret intelligence and military agencies, or has been ignored. Neither approach makes sense. One European nation is pioneering a program in which visits to jihadist sites prompt automated anti-radicalization messages. That sends a dual message: We're watching, and do the right thing.

Let's be honest: It's too late to stop the radicalization of Islamic State fighters. The battle to "degrade and ultimately destroy" those recruits, unfortunately, will now be waged with Apache gunships and drones. But maybe their younger brothers and cousins can be deterred from violent extremism by programs like the ones that Hedayah is promoting.

A Call To Action From 'Patient Zero' Monica Lewinsky

By Ruth Marcus

[Washington Post](#), October 21, 2014

Monica Lewinsky is trying to make lemonade out of 16-year-old lemons. Good for her, and good, ultimately, for us.

Not so good, of course, for Hillary Clinton's nascent presidential campaign, but not fatal either. Lewinsky's decision to reemerge as a public figure, this time committed to alleviating the scourge of cyberbullying, is awkward.

Still, it is inevitable, even without Lewinsky front and center, that Bill Clinton's deplorable conduct in office will come up as a topic during his wife's campaign, assuming she gets to the general election this time. The earlier it's talked about, the more old-newsy the whole mess will seem by the time Clinton's opponents try to make it relevant.

In the meantime, Lewinsky is making an important point about the role of the Internet and accompanying modern technology as an accelerant in the destruction of personal reputation and the associated harm caused by online exposure.

"Overnight, I went from being a completely private figure to a publicly humiliated one. I was Patient Zero," Lewinsky said in a speech Monday to Forbes's Under 30 Summit in Philadelphia. "The first person to have their reputation completely destroyed worldwide via the Internet."

Lewinsky's "Patient Zero" claim is more than a little overblown. Even without the medium of the Internet, without the Drudge Report to break the news on the Web or dial-up connections to let readers access the Starr report in all its detail, the story would have emerged, and it would have been huge.

Ask Donna Rice and Gary Hart. As Matt Bai has recently reminded us, Hart's presidential campaign was instantaneously destroyed and Rice's name became a household word, back when a mouse was a rodent and blog was a typo.

"Somehow, political and personal lives had collided overnight to create what was, in hindsight, the first modern political scandal, with all the attendant satellite trucks and saturation coverage and hourly turns in the narrative that Kafka himself could not have dreamed up," Bai writes in his book "All the Truth Is Out: The Week Politics Went Tabloid."

In truth, politics has always had its tabloid aspect. Grover Cleveland's critics chanted "Ma, Ma, where's my pa?" referring to an illegitimate child during the 1884 presidential campaign. And reputations have always been susceptible to overnight ruin.

But Lewinsky is also correct when she says that "the experience of shame and humiliation online is different than offline. There is no way to wrap your mind around where the humiliation ends — there are no borders."

She described how it felt “to watch yourself — or your name and likeness — be ripped apart online . . . For me, that was every day in 1998. There was a rotation of worsening name-calling and descriptions of me. I would go online, read in a paper or see on TV people referring to me as: tramp, slut, whore, tart, bimbo, floozy, even spy. The New York Post’s Page Six took to calling me, almost daily, the Portly Pepperpot. I was shattered.”

This is where Lewinsky’s effort can be most helpful. Few of us, thankfully, will be subjected to a Lewinsky-level public shaming. But many of us, and many of our children, will suffer the cyber slings and arrows of Internet-enabled humiliation and abuse.

Since Lewinsky’s moment, the mechanisms for humiliation and the venues for abuse have multiplied. Imagine Linda Tripp with a webcam and smartphone. Imagine the episode in the age of Twitter and Facebook.

Lewinsky says she was moved to come forward by the experience of Rutgers freshman Tyler Clementi, who committed suicide after his roommate secretly taped and streamed video of Clementi kissing another man.

“Having survived myself, what I want to do now is help other victims of the shame game survive too,” Lewinsky said. “What we need is a radical change in attitudes — on the Internet, mobile platforms and in the society of which they are a part.”

Indeed, the response to Lewinsky’s speech — and to her decision, either courageous or foolhardy, to join Twitter — only serves to underscore the ugliness she decries. “#HereWeGo,” Lewinsky wrote in her maiden tweet, and so the Twitterverse did, in all its predictable coarseness.

If Lewinsky’s solution to this “compassion deficit” feels unformed — well, she’s not the only one who is struggling with how to re-civilize society. Simply going public may be Lewinsky’s greatest service. A parent trying to comfort a teenager victimized by cyberbullies can point to Lewinsky and say: If she can survive, so can you.

Read more from Ruth Marcus’s archive, follow her on Twitter or subscribe to her updates on Facebook.

Meet The One Democrat Who Is Not Running From Obama

By Dana Milbank

[Washington Post](#), October 22, 2014

David Perdue took the cheap and easy route.

The Republican Senate candidate in Georgia, like Republican candidates in most other competitive races, calculated that the surest road to victory was to tie his opponent, in this case Democrat Michelle Nunn, to President Obama.

“The president himself said, ‘make no mistake, these policies are on the ballot,’” Perdue said in a TV ad last week. As a photo of Obama with Nunn filled the screen, Perdue continued: “That’s why he wants her in the Senate.”

It was typical of Perdue’s campaign strategy of trying to run against Obama. What was not typical was Nunn’s response: She ran a spot of her own, featuring the same photo of herself with Obama.

“Have you seen this picture?” she asks viewers. “It’s the one David Perdue has used to try and attack me in this campaign.” As the image shifts to a photo of George H.W. Bush with his hand on her shoulder, Nunn goes on: “But what he doesn’t tell you is that it was taken at an event honoring President Bush, who I worked for as CEO of his Points of Light Foundation. Throughout my career I’ve been able to work with Republicans and Democrats, and that’s the same approach I’ll bring to the U.S. Senate.”

Nunn, daughter of the legendary Senate Democratic centrist Sam Nunn, may yet lose the race. But she is doing far better than expected in her run despite the hostile year and terrain for Democrats. A big reason for this: She's showing authenticity and courage at a time when both are in short supply among Democratic candidates.

Nunn's comfort in her own skin is in sharp contrast to other Democrats on the ballot, who are making awkward maneuvers to distance themselves from Obama and much of the Democratic Party.

In Kentucky, Democratic Senate candidate Alison Lundergan Grimes ran an ad declaring "I'm not Barack Obama." In Louisiana, an ad from Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu showed her saying "the administration's policies are simply wrong on oil and gas production."

Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska) boasted in an ad that he "took on Obama" on Arctic oil production and "voted against President Obama's trillion-dollar tax increase." (Actually, the vote was a Republican stunt.) Sen. Mark Pryor (D-Ark.) bragged of opposing gun restrictions Obama favored, proclaiming, "No one from New York or Washington tells me what to do."

And then there's Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) who skipped an Obama visit to his state and made the absurd claim that, at the White House, "the last person they want to see coming is me."

But running from Obama is dumb, both because it doesn't fool anybody and because it makes the candidate look shifty. Certainly, Obama is unpopular in the states that form this year's battlefield. But voters are savvy enough to know that Democratic lawmakers tend to support a Democratic president. And Obama seems to have a suicidal wish to remind Americans of this, telling liberal radio host Al Sharpton Monday that "these are all folks who vote with me."

The attempt to run from Obama only makes the runner look calculating at a time when voters are disgusted with anything that smells political. That helps to explain the Elizabeth Warren phenomenon. The Democratic senator from Massachusetts, a raging populist, is far more liberal than Obama. Yet she's in demand as a surrogate for Democrats even in places such as Kentucky and West Virginia.

As The Post's Paul Kane noted, she's campaigning for Senate candidates in Minnesota, Iowa and Colorado this week, and candidates are clearly not afraid to stand with her as she delivers her fist-pumping jeremiad against Republicans and wealthy interests.

Contrast that with Kentucky's Grimes, who had a promising start but has turned into a feckless candidate. She repeatedly refused to say whether she even voted for Obama, actually claiming during a debate last week that she wouldn't "compromise a constitutional right" by revealing this secret.

The day after that preposterous dodge, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee said it was stopping advertising in Kentucky — essentially an acknowledgment that Grimes would lose — and was buying advertising time in support of Nunn in Georgia.

Republicans tried to play the same game with Nunn, but she didn't make Grimes's mistake. "I did vote for the president," she told The Post's Ed O'Keefe.

Of course she did. She's a Democrat, and she's not going to insult voters' intelligence by pretending otherwise. If that causes her to lose in Georgia, she at least will have kept her dignity.

Twitter: @Milbank

Read more from Dana Milbank's archive, follow him on Twitter or subscribe to his updates on Facebook.

WILMINGTON NEWS JOURNAL STORIES

Racial Parity Will Transform Delaware By 2060

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Northernmost Delaware's racial and ethnic mix now appears headed toward parity by the year 2060 with the diversity now found in Philadelphia or the Dallas and Houston areas, new population projections show.

The change would be part of a projected century-long trend that already has made it more likely than not that any random encounter in Kent or New Castle counties, or in the state as a whole, will involve a person of a different racial or ethnic group.

USA Today commissioned a nationwide demographic analysis to produce similar assessments for every county in the nation, using a 0-to-100 Diversity Index scale that reflects the random chance of meeting someone different. By 2060, forecasters concluded, nationwide odds of bumping into someone of the same race or ethnicity will be less than 1 in 3.

Even rural areas that as recently as 1960 were virtually all white are changing dramatically. Relatively rural spots like Cecil and Dorchester counties in Maryland or Cumberland County, N.J., along Delaware Bay are now expected to have populations even more diverse than New Castle County's 50 year's hence.

In nearby Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, the chances of encountering a non-white resident were only 3 percent in 1960. Now the odds are nearly 30 percent, and by 2060 will move to just better than even, though still trailing the country.

"You can see the direction that things are heading," said Edward C. Ratledge, a University Delaware professor and director of the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research. "It's the same thing throughout the country. It's a more diverse population than ever. The question is: What does it say about the point when the minorities are a majority."

According to the projections, Delaware will rank as the 15th most-diverse state in the country by 2060, with New Castle County's racial and ethnic mix rising to the top 6 percent of counties nationwide. In contrast, Sussex County – once the state's most racially mixed – began trailing in diversity in the 1980s and 1990s as largely white resort-area and retirement populations swelled; it is expected to still have a 64 percent white population in 2060.

Forecasts for the rest of the Delmarva Peninsula are similar, if less extreme. They quickly lead to questions about how the population will blend, or not blend, below the broad-brush county-level statistics, and how areas and neighborhoods will look in a state where racial and ethnic segregation is a fact of life.

Kent and New Castle counties are among the 11 percent of counties nationwide where the Diversity Index already has crossed the 50 percent threshold. By 2060, both will be among the 13.8 percent of counties with a 67 percent or greater "hyperdiversity."

Wicomico and Worcester counties in Maryland, where Salisbury and Ocean City lie, respectively, will cross that same hyperdiversity line between 2050 and 2060.

No group will increase faster than Hispanic residents, expected to account for about 16 percent of New Castle and Sussex County's population by 2060, twice the present share. And no group will decline more rapidly than non-Hispanic white residents, already in the minority in some areas, including Colonial School District.

Poll: How do you think Delaware will adjust to growing diversity in th...

Among the more-prominent forecasts:

- The state's overall white population will drop from 71 percent in 2010 to 59 percent in 2060, with non-Hispanic whites expected to become a minority.
- The number of Hispanic residents in Delaware will be more than 2.6 times higher than today, growing from nearly 8 percent currently to 15 percent, with the more-than 193,000 statewide Hispanic total in 2060 exceeding the entire 2010 population of either Sussex County or Kent County.
- About 6.6 times more residents will identify themselves as being of two or more races.
- Although the number of black residents will increase by nearly 53 percent, their share of the statewide population will move only from 22 to 24 percent.
- The number of residents identifying themselves as Asian or American Indian will increase, but not as fast as other racial and ethnic groups. The state's Asian population will decline as a percentage of the total from 3.2 percent in 2010 to 2.8 percent in 2060.

American Indian residents, led by Delaware's Nanticoke Indian tribe members, and Pacific Islanders remain at only a fraction of a percent of the population.

Sussex County, more diverse than the rest of the state in 1960, lost ground by 1990 as the pace of Baby Boomer retirements and better off white residents moved in. Although the poultry industry's expansion fed a huge growth in laborers through immigration, especially from Guatemala, overall diversity in Sussex is not expected to cross the 50 percent mark before 2030.

But already densely-populated New Castle County will grow far more slowly than the rest of the state, with increases in other groups coming at the expense of those identifying themselves solely as white.

By 2060, the "White Only" population of New Castle County will be 9 percent lower than today – the only group expected to decline in absolute numbers in Delaware.

The total for black residents will increase significantly in absolute numbers, but that group's share of the total will grow more slowly than the multi-racial and Hispanic groups.

"There are questions about what the impacts of increased diversity are going to be in pretty much every major institution," said Barrett A. Lee, who directs the sociology department and Population Research Institute at Penn State University. "What are the consequences for local economies, politics, health care? How are increases in diversity going to affect things like civic engagement, or relations among racial or ethnic groups?"

Rural Kent County resident and small business owner Deborah J. Torrijos heartily agrees with predictions that Hispanic residents will increase their share of Delaware's population over the next 50 years, but considers the estimates low.

"Too conservative," says Torrijos, a legal and health care interpreter. "I believe that the numbers now are inaccurate, and that there actually are more Hispanics here than the Census counted."

"I think acceptance in the general population has grown," Torrijos added. "There are always people who are reluctant to accept different cultures or languages. It depends on what circles that day you're running in. To be honest, I still encounter some bigotry or insensitivity of culture from people who say 'You should speak English.'"

Delaware's Indo-Asian population, concentrated in northern Delaware, began to grow in the early 1970s as student enrollments from that country increased at the University of Delaware.

"The number of people from southern Asia has really grown in the last 8 to 10 years, and the community support has gotten better," said Gopal Bhagia, a leading member of the Indo-American

Association of Delaware. "We're recognized now within the local communities that we work with. That recognition has increased tremendously."

The Census Bureau uses "Asian" as an umbrella term to take in those with heritages ranging from Pakistan and India to China, the Philippines, Japan and Malaysia. Likewise for the less-obvious factors that seem to prop up the white population, a category that includes citizens of Middle Eastern and North African descent.

In practice, Indian-Americans and Indian immigrants accounted for about 41 percent, or 12,000, of the state's roughly 30,000-member Asian population on average between 2008 and 2012 according to the Census Bureau. Those from China represented about 11 percent, Filipino another 7 percent.

Delaware lies in the heart of the region that is becoming "increasingly multi-hued, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic," according to a study on nationwide trends led by Penn State's Barrett Lee and released in late 2012.

"The most diverse communities in the U.S. are disproportionately western, southern, and coastal metropolitan areas and their principal cities and suburbs," the report noted. It added that the trend is both pervasive and a regular source of "debate, if not rancor."

Lee said separately: "We don't know if there will be a lot of unresolved issues. We don't have a crystal ball to figure out if increased diversity is going to lead to more conflict and competition for resources."

While immigration already is a frequently mentioned issue, Lee added, much more is at work.

"Many people think it's all about immigration. But even if there was some reason, or if we could magically turn off the immigration faucet today, the population would still become more and more diverse over time," Lee said, "partly because much of the increasing diversity is due to natural increases within those groups."

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Odor-plagued Compost Plant Ordered To Shut Down

By Jeff Montgomery

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

State environmental regulators have ordered the shutdown of an industrial scale composting plant near the Port of Wilmington that critics say produced a years-long siege of foul odors affecting tens of thousands.

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Secretary David Small said he would decline to re-issue a needed five-year "beneficial use" recycling determination for Peninsula Compost LLC's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center along Christiana Avenue.

As of Tuesday, the company was prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

"It's disappointing, but it was clear that the facility was causing an undue burden on the communities in close proximity to the facility, the city of Wilmington and parts of New Castle County," Small said.

"The inability to maintain compliance by this facility and the implications, most specifically the odor impacts to the community, had just gotten to a point where it was no longer acceptable," Small said.

Rep. James Johnson, D-New Castle, said that Small called him shortly after noon to tell him of the decision.

"The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years," Johnson said. "It's a relief to have a good answer."

Peninsula's Wilmington Organics Recycling Center opened the \$20 million facility in late 2009, aiming to convert up to 160,000 tons yearly of spoiled, discarded and outdated food and other castoffs into marketable compost. The company intended to use a rapid, under-cover composting method and tight process and raw material controls.

That intent was soon knocked off track by unwanted materials in the center's supply streams, operating troubles and a weak economy, among other factors. At one point, backlogged piles of compost caught fire and sent cloying smoke across the Port of Wilmington, briefly shutting it down.

Complaints about the plant's distinctive odor surfaced in nearby disadvantaged neighborhoods, and eventually spread across the city, north to Brandywine Hundred and even across the Delaware River, to Pennsville, New Jersey.

As recently as Monday, regional developer Robert Buccini, with Buccini Pollin Group said the stench "hurts economic growth throughout the city." BPG's headquarters stands northwest of the plant site, in the path of odors.

Hours before Johnson's report, northeast Wilmington resident Brenda Watson said she was "hoping and praying" that the trouble ends.

"The smell is too much," Watson said. "In the summertime, you want to save on the expense of the air conditioner in the evening so you put in a window fan, but the smell is so bad you have to shut everything all the time."

"It's unbelievable," Watson added. "I took a bus trip to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a few weeks ago, and as soon as we got to 12th Street coming back, I knew where we were because of the smell."

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Delaware Businesses Stockpile Road Salt

By Melissa Nann Burke

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 20, 2014

Unlike some agencies, DelDOT did not run out of road salt last winter, but turned down requests to share its salt stockpile.

After exhausting their supplies of road salt last winter – or coming close – businesses and cities in the region are stockpiling extra in case of another super snowy season.

The Port of Wilmington will import roughly 350,000 metric tons of salt before year's end, and is on pace to handle 800,000 to a million tons of salt this year to meet demands Delaware, South Jersey and the five-county Philadelphia region, said Jeff Koetitz, director of operations for Port Contractors Inc., a materials- and cargo-handling firm.

That's compared to 250,000 tons that passed through the port in 2013. Much of the salt is road-grade, but not all. It comes from Mexico, Egypt, Chile, Spain, the United Kingdom and elsewhere.

"Everyone's all hyped up," Koetitz said. "Let's just hope it snows."

Workers at the port last week were unloading a portion of a 40,000-ton shipment from Chile when U.S. Sen. Chris Coons and Delaware Economic Development Director Alan Levin toured the vessel with port officials.

The bulk of the salt was transferred to dump trucks and hauled to Oceanport LLC, a rock salt company in Claymont, for storage, Koetitz said.

"How long can you store salt?" Coons asked.

"A long time – years," replied Michael Evanko, president of Port Contractors. "It does get hard. Sometimes, we have to break it up and crush it."

Chemical Equipment Labs, a salt provider in Marcus Hook, tries to keep about 200,000 tons of salt on hand at most times to supply its customers, which range from apartment buildings to office complexes to landscapers, CEO Edward Morgan said. This year, the company expects to order an additional 500,000 tons during the season, he said.

"The longest we kept several piles was when there was no snow for about three years. That was brutal," Morgan told Coons. "We sold everything we had last year."

Snowfall totals last winter made the record books in many areas, blowing through cities' snow-removal budgets and causing salt shortages when demand exceeded locally available supplies.

The supply chain choked when municipalities around the country tried to simultaneously replenish dwindling stockpiles after successive snow and ice storms. Shipments from salt flats in places such as Chile can take two to three weeks. In some places, ice-clogged rivers blocked the passage of barge traffic.

"In times like last year, they just can't get it in quick enough. There's logistics issues," Morgan said.

The Delaware Department of Transportation benefits from proximity to the Port of Wilmington, when compared with inland DOTs and road-salt customers, officials said.

"Last winter, many states had problems moving the salt to where they needed it," said Jim Westhoff, a DelDOT spokesman.

DelDOT did not run out of road salt, but turned down requests to share its stockpile, worrying about getting too low.

The agency currently has more than 43,150 tons of salt stockpiled, and doesn't have the capacity to store much more. DelDOT is responsible for treating 89 percent of Delaware roadways, and typically uses 13,000 tons of salt during severe storms.

"We have no plans for any considerable increase in the amount of salt we stockpile," Westhoff said. "However, we are working on adding some additional storage capacity in Sussex County, to reduce our travel time if we have an event in Sussex, and need a great deal of road salt there."

Crews at maintenance yards in the three counties are preparing for snow equipment inspections, which begin this week, said Brian Urbanek, assistant director of support services for DelDOT.

Mechanics will be checking the hydraulic lines, headlights, horns and salt spreaders among the elements of 333 snow plows.

Last week, the agency offered equipment operators a chance to brush up on their snow-plowing skills in a computer simulator set up in Dover. More than 120 DelDOT employees participated, in addition to dozens of operators from towns and counties around the state.

With three large displays representing the windshield and windows, the simulator program runs the driver through different storm scenarios. The streetscape varies from urban to rural. Drivers must react quickly to successfully navigate obstacles from poor visibility, to slippery roadways, to darting pedestrians and deer.

"There's lots of things going on out there when we're pushing snow. Cars don't put their turn signals on, or they pull out in front of you. People don't realize this truck doesn't stop on a dime," said Gary Licsko, who plows a route in the Seaford area.

"This is a good training exercise, especially for new operators. But nothing is going to get exactly like the real thing."

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Del. Treasurer Race Gets Personal

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Drew Wilson, Barney's campaign manager, made the comments by email after Barney's campaign accused Simpler of continuing to "attack and demean" the Democrat's military experience at a Millsboro candidate forum hosted by the American Legion last week.

Simpler's campaign manager, Jim Gibbons, criticized Barney for "mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler," saying "we are proud of the campaign we've run."

The latest back-and-forth could be evidence of concern among Democrats. Internal polling shows Simpler leading Barney about two weeks before Delawareans vote on Nov. 4, according to Democratic and Republican sources.

Privately, Democrats express concern that Barney could lose despite a 125,000 Democratic voter registration advantage statewide.

Simpler is a former investment fund manager and chief financial officer of his family's Rehoboth-based hotel management business who has focused his campaign for state treasurer on his money management experience.

Barney is a former policy aide to Gov. Jack Markell and U.S. Sen. Tom Carper, and a former Marine who served and was severely wounded in Iraq. The Democrat has called attention to his military background, saying it is evidence of his commitment to public service.

Simpler's campaign has not targeted Barney's military service as an issue. At the Millsboro forum last Wednesday, in fact, Simpler praised Barney for serving.

But the Republican did invoke Barney's military background while criticizing Barney for going negative. Simpler made the comments during the closing moments of a debate held on Sept. 11 at the Siegel Jewish Community Center in Talleyville.

"H

e has gone around saying that he wants to be treated like a hero. He should start acting like one and stop listening to his political handlers who are giving him terrible advice about how to prosecute a campaign," Simpler said while reacting to a campaign attack from Barney that misrepresented his position on Medicare.

"

We do not need....another Democrat who is a political opportunist looking for a platform," Simpler added. "We want someone who wants to do this job with the highest degree of professionalism."

In recent days, Barney criticized Simpler for comments in Millsboro that he says inappropriately equated Simpler's skills as a finance manager with the "specialized skills" used by doctors to save Barney's life after he was severely wounded by a gunshot in 2006 in Iraq.

"I want to honor the veterans here who have given us service and I want to honor my opponent as well. And I note that he said something very important, that he wouldn't be here with us today but for people who had highly specialized training," Simpler said, according to an unofficial transcript.

“Training matters. Special skills matter. For the last four years we had Treasury managed by someone who has an excellent academic resume and who has a successful law practice, but he has absolutely no financial background.”

Wilson, Barney’s campaign manager, said Simpler’s comments are evidence of a “serious character flaw. He can’t recognize the difference between a life devoted to secretively managing money for millionaires and the 11+ years of training that go into saving lives under fire by becoming a military surgeon.”

Gibbons, Simpler’s campaign manager, said Barney’s attacks are evidence that the Democrat is not connecting with voters.

“Sean Barney has had months to make his case to voters, and has simply failed to do so. Voters know that Sean has no finance experience,” Gibbons said. “As a result, he is now desperate and can resort only to mudslinging and personal attacks aimed at destroying Ken Simpler. Delawareans don’t want that kind of politics and we are not going there.”

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1tla2HM>

Top 9 Projects That Need Funding

By Jonathan Starkey

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Gov. Jack Markell signed legislation in August that parks officials hope will help chip away at a \$100 million capital projects backlog that has built up in state parks.

The new law allows state officials to invest parks and open space money more aggressively, using a new endowment to fund outdoor development and stewardship.

Here are the top nine projects that need funding, according to parks officials. Some cost estimates, including the cost for renovations at the popular Killens Pond waterpark, represent only the first phase of larger projects.

Not all of these projects will find funding under the new plan signed by Markell, but here’s the wish list:

1. Cape Henlopen State Park: Sewer system upgrades: \$2 million

Necessary relining work on Cape Henlopen’s sewer system is the parks system’s number-one priority.

2. Killens Pond State Park: Waterpark renovations, \$2.8 million

Lawmakers and parks officials have pointed to the need to renovate the main pool, install new slides, add spray facilities, improve bathroom facilities and more. The cost here represents phase one of \$12 million in planned upgrades.

3. Fort Delaware State Park: Tram path repairs, \$100,000

The path is eroding on the sides into the marsh and presenting a hazard in accessing the fort, especially at night, parks officials say.

4. Auburn Heights Preserve: Retrofit sprinkler system, \$75,000

The sprinkler and freeze proof systems protect a collection of antique cars housed in the museum in Yorklyn. The current system is having clogging issues.

5. Bellevue State Park: Demolition of indoor tennis center, \$1.6 million

The cost of this project increased two-fold because of large amounts of asbestos found inside and concerns about protecting a historic school house that is attached. The state is also worried about trespassers in this high-traffic area of a busy park.

6. Brandywine Creek State Park: Rocky Run Bridge, \$600,000-\$800,000

The bridge on one of the state's most popular hiking trails was washed out during a series of storms. Completion of this project is expected in early 2015. A temporary structure will be installed in two weeks.

7. Wilmington State Parks: Overhaul of H. Fletcher Brown Park, \$1.5 million

State officials are working with the Rotary on a renovations plan that will include accessibility upgrades, gathering areas, preservation of historic monuments and a greening of the landscape. They are also seeking federal funding.

8. Fort DuPont State Park: Shop upgrades, \$60,000

The park's shop, critical to the maintenance of Fort DuPont, Fort Delaware, Grassdale and Port Penn sites, has no running water and is prone to flooding. The projects will likely exceed these initial cost estimates.

9. Lums Pond State Park: Campground utility upgrades, \$4.7 million

The state wants to add electricity to camping sites, to allow campers to charge phones, speakers, lights and other accessories requiring power. They are also looking at adding sewer for some campsites, exploring sewer treatment plant improvement, and considering adding cabins to the park. Some parts of this plan could move forward without full funding.

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Rodel Report Pushes Personalized Learning

By Matthew Albright

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Some Delaware teachers are working on classrooms of the future, but the state needs to make some big changes before every student can learn in one.

These are the main conclusions of a blueprint released Tuesday by the Rodel Teacher Council, a group of educators from all three counties assembled by the Rodel Foundation of Delaware, a think-tank dedicated to improving the state's education system.

The report offers suggestions for how to personalize learning for students using technology and alternative models for schools and classrooms.

Take council member Jennifer Hollstein's English class at the Charter School of Wilmington.

Students work on research papers, using online resources such as UDLive or TED Talks on their computers. Hollstein monitors their progress on her laptop, approving timelines and research notes.

"Not only are they no longer limited by their library, they're not limited by a classroom structure that tells them how to do everything," Hollstein said.

If Delaware can get to the point where every classroom looks more like Hollstein's, the state could move away from a traditional grade-level model to a "competency-based" approach, where students advance once they've mastered concepts, the report suggests.

The goal is to create an educational system in which every student learns at their own pace, so that advanced students can more easily work through high school material and start earning college credits

while less-advanced students aren't left struggling with a concept just because lesson plans have moved on, the report says.

"We really want to reach the kids who feel disenfranchised by school," said Michelle Johnson, a gifted and talented teacher at Towne Point Elementary School in Dover.

But if this idea is going to gain any traction, there will need to be big changes, the report says.

To make personalized learning widespread, states and districts would need to change the structure for earning course credits away from grade levels towards mastery of ideas. Schools would need more flexibility in "seat time" rules, so that students can spend time on the subjects they need the most help with, not the ones that happen to fall in a certain grade.

Teachers also would need to be trained in the new system, both in new technological tools and a new style of managing classrooms.

"If you go into a classroom that's doing this right, it can look a little chaotic, because everybody's working on their own," Hollstein said. "It's a different way of thinking about the classroom."

Though it's unlikely all these changes will happen immediately, some districts are working together to try to find ways to make personalized learning work.

The BRINC consortium, a coalition of the Brandywine, Indian River, Colonial and New Castle County Vo-Tech districts, has been investing time and money into helping teachers and information technology staffs

"We know the state is looking at this and we all know this is coming in the future," said council member Robyn Howton, an English teacher at Mt. Pleasant High School. "We want to keep pushing this as an issue that needs to be talked about."

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Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1wj3tJo>

Time For Some Reasons To Feel #delaproud

By Jeffrey Gentry

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

It's been a few weeks since we discussed feeling #delaproud about anything, so I thought we could do that today.

First, let's go ahead and scratch Hunter **Biden** off the list for this discussion. That little failed drug test for the Navy was a real dumb move on his part.

This might be a shocker, but I'm #delaproud of Wilmington Mayor Dennis P. Williams and his decision to form a homicide unit. Is it going to make a difference or is it just a renaming of a group of people who will do what they were doing before? Who knows. But it was good to see something the community felt would make a difference come to fruition.

How about being #delaproud of the hundreds of Newark High School students who DID NOT get involved in multiple brawls at the school on Monday. We've heard about the dozen or so arrests. I'm #delaproud of those of you who stayed out of it.

Definitely feeling #delaproud of Nasai Oliver, the 12-year-old Cab Calloway student who opened a lemonade stand at the corner of Jessup Street and Vandever Avenue in Wilmington. Originally done to raise money for a pair of Nike Air Jordan sneakers, Oliver kept the stand open and earned enough for the shoes, his back-to-school wardrobe and plans to give a portion to charity. Oliver's positive attitude has quickly become an example for others.

How about being #delaproud of the hard-working scientists at the DuPont Co.'s Experimental Station going back to the 1950s. Their work has contributed to what has become a key weapon in the Ebola fight – personal protection apparel.

Feeling #delaproud about the state's farmers. The recent tragic accident in Middletown served as a horrible reminder of how dangerous the occupation remains today.

Newark's Ronaldo Tello Marzol deserves a #delaproud shoutout. The editor general of Delaware Hispano, a Spanish-language magazine he started here, won the Trailblazer Businessperson of the Year award at the recent Hispanic Choice Awards in Philadelphia, honoring businesspeople and community leaders in the region.

And finally, I'm #delaproud of all 20 teachers chosen as finalists to be Delaware's next State Teacher of the Year, especially Megan Szabo, a 7th and 8th grade science teacher at Postlethwait Middle School. Szabo was named State Teacher of the Year Tuesday night.

Have some #delaproud things you'd like to share? Send them my way by email or drop by my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/jeffreygentryTNJMG and let me know. I may share yours in a future column.

Share in the Only in Delaware conversation 24/7 on [delawareonline](http://delawareonline.com). Contact Jeffrey Gentry at jgentry@delawareonline.com. Follow him on Twitter: @jeffreygentry

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WILMINGTON JOURNAL NEWS EDITORIALS

What Delawareans Need To Know About Ebola

By Karyl Rattay

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Dear Delawarean,

Because of the diagnosis of individuals in Dallas with Ebola virus and the subsequent intense media coverage, I know people are concerned. As Delaware's State Health Officer, I want to help Delawareans separate the facts from fiction and to know what is being done in Delaware in the event that we have the Ebola virus in our state. And I want people to know where to turn if they have concerns or questions.

The tragic epidemic of the Ebola virus infection in West Africa continues to unfold. Particularly affected are the countries of Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Recently, the Ebola virus was transmitted to two nurses from an ill Liberian man in Dallas, Texas. The man subsequently passed away, and the nurses are still hospitalized. The two women contracted the illness due to a combination of direct contact with a severely ill individual and a presumed break in hospital personal protection measures.

None of the community contacts of the man who passed away in Dallas became ill, including his family and friends. The other health care workers who treated him are still under observation and will remain so until the 21-day incubation period passes.

Based on currently available information, Ebola virus is only transmitted by patients who have symptoms, and the risk of getting the disease through normal, everyday contact is very low. The people being monitored by health officials in other states who came into brief contact with the three ill people in Texas or on an airplane, are being monitored as an extra precaution, not because there is a high risk of a genuine large spread of the illness. And, the close family and friends of the man who passed away in Texas were just released from monitoring as the incubation period has passed and no one became ill.

As you move through your day, remember this virus, and many other viruses, can be killed through careful hand-washing and alcohol-based sanitizers.

To become ill with Ebola, a person must come into direct contact with blood or bodily fluids of an infected individual. Ebola symptoms occur after an incubation period of two to 21 days and include:

- Fever (temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius)
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain
- Unexplained bleeding or bruising
- Muscle pain

The Delaware Division of Public Health has been actively preparing for a potential Ebola illness in Delaware. While the risk is low for Delaware, it is important to be prepared for any situation. DPH has been working with medical providers, hospitals, some employers, EMS and other partners to ensure they are ready. DPH is particularly focused on ensuring medical partners can immediately recognize a potential case and handle the patient appropriately.

All Delaware hospitals have confirmed the ability to manage Ebola patients. That means they have put in place plans to isolate patients with Ebola, and are training on practices to protect health care workers. If a case is confirmed in Delaware, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention special team will immediately be placed on the ground to help DPH trace any potential contacts whom may also need to be isolated and help to determine if the ill patient should be moved out of state for treatment.

I know Delawareans have questions about what they should do if they suspect a person they encounter might be infected with Ebola virus. First, it is important we don't make assumptions that someone might be infected based on their accent, background or skin color, and it is important to remember how hard the disease is to get.

If you or a loved one start to show symptoms you find concerning, call your health care provider. Flu season has started in Delaware. Flu and several travel-related illnesses including malaria, typhoid fever and dengue, are much more common than Ebola. The symptoms of all these diseases are very similar.

If you wish to discuss a suspected case, you may contact DPH at (888) 295-5156 Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or (302) 744-4700 after 4:30 p.m., weekends and holidays. If you have general questions, the CDC has a 24/7 line available for general questions on the Ebola virus and can be reached by calling (800) CDC-INFO (800-232-4636).

I hope I have helped to address concerns you may have. The attached fact sheet is provided for more information. Visit dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/index.html for additional information.

Karyl Rattay, MD, MS, is the director of Delaware's Public Health Department of Health and Social Services.

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An End To The Stench Could Finally Mean Fresh Air

[Wilmington \(DE\) News Journal](#), October 21, 2014

Finally, residents living within smelling range of an industrial-scale composting plant got some long overdue sweet news about their neighborhood's atmosphere Tuesday. It will soon be over.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, prodded by the evidence of the stink pollution and political leaders' advocacy on behalf of frustrated residents, has ordered the doors of the site closed.

The company is now prohibited from taking in new food or other organic wastes. Composting of materials on hand can continue until January, with all that remains afterward required to be removed by March.

How bad was it? Real bad, and for the last seven years. The odor did not just hover over the nearby homes and businesses. It traveled beyond the lower-income neighborhoods that bordered the site into downtown Wilmington and across the river to Pennsville, New Jersey.

How bad was it? At one time, backlogged piles of compost caught fire, with smoking foul odor shutting down the entire Port of Wilmington.

Complaints have been consistent since soon after the plant began operating on a full schedule in 2009. The \$20 million site can convert up to 160,000 tons of spoiled, outdated food into what's described as "marketable compost."

However, not even closing their doors and sealing their windows shut kept out the odor that settled in the atmosphere of the nearby residents' homes. This was stagnant air pollution, made worse by the fact that Peninsula ran into unwanted materials and debris in the plant's supply streams. A problem likely not of their fault, but one they had difficulty in resolving.

And yet the site kept its permit. It kept functioning and assaulting the neighborhoods with foul odor. Then word came of the closing.

On Monday, a recent New Jersey transplant to the area sent this note to The News Journal Editorial Board.

"If you are looking for a great story...cover the unbearable stench that is always lingering on the Southbridge side from the dumping of what I believe is waste and chemicals. Of course! It is located on the highly populated side of blacks and Latino communities. Frustrating. ... gagging smell. The company's rather pay the fine every time and not rectify the issue and shut it down!

"Wonder why it's a high cancer rate in Delaware? I feel like Erin Brockovich. You have to smell it for yourself to feel my disbelief and frustration."

No, we don't. Finally, DNREC ordered the needed shutdown, based on overwhelming evidence. Now those residents and workers in south Wilmington have the long-sought-after relief they deserve.

State Rep. James Johnson, who represents the area, said of the decision: "The people in this area have had to tolerate these odors and the effect of the smell on their quality of life for a number of years. It's a relief to have a good answer."

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