

**USA  
TODAY®**  
**04.07.18**

## IN BRIEF

### Judge rules assault weapons ban doesn't violate 2nd Amendment

Assault weapons and large-capacity magazines are not protected by the Second Amendment, a federal judge said in a ruling Friday upholding Massachusetts' ban on the weapons.

U.S. District Judge William Young dismissed a lawsuit challenging the 20-year-old ban, saying assault weapons are military firearms that fall beyond the reach of the constitutional right to "bear arms." Plaintiffs are studying whether to appeal the ruling.

### FEMA: \$50 billion needed to rebuild Puerto Rico after Maria

The head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency said Friday that it will take up to \$50 billion to help rebuild Puerto Rico from Hurricane Maria and warned that the U.S. territory isn't ready for another disaster.

Brock Long said his agency aims to make the island's roads, homes and electrical grid as strong as possible.

Officials announced Thursday that 283 schools will close this summer amid the continuing departure of families after the devastating hurricane.

### Texas congressman Farenthold resigns amid harassment scandal

Embattled U.S. Rep. Blake Farenthold of Texas resigned Friday, saying it was time "to move along and look for new ways to serve."

Farenthold, a Republican from Corpus Christi who was first elected in the 2010 tea party wave, has been dogged by months of controversy over a sexual harassment settlement paid with taxpayer funds. His resignation follows his earlier announcement that he would not seek another term.

### Israeli troops kill 7; hundreds injured in Gaza border protest

Israeli troops killed seven men Friday in the second mass protest in as many weeks along Gaza's volatile border, as Palestinians torched piles of tires to create a smoke screen to block the view of snipers.

Friday's deaths brought to 29 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli fire over the past week.

*From staff and wire reports*

## USA SNAPSHOTS®



SOURCE Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security  
MIKE B. SMITH, JANET LOEHRKE/USA TODAY

# U.S. sanctions embrace more Russians, companies

## Seven oligarchs close to Putin included in list

Oren Dorell and Doug Stanglin  
USA TODAY

The Trump administration imposed new sanctions Friday on 38 individuals and companies close to Russian President Vladimir Putin — including seven Russian oligarchs and 17 government officials — in response to the Kremlin's worldwide pattern of "malign activities," according to senior administration officials.

The seven oligarchs include Oleg Deripaska, an aluminum magnate who had past business dealings with Paul Manafort, Trump's former campaign chairman, who has been indicted by Special Counsel Robert Mueller on money-laundering charges.



Presidents Vladimir Putin and Trump.  
MIKHAIL KLIMENTYEV/AP

Many of the targets are individuals and businesses with ties to Russia's energy sector, including those linked to state-owned Gazprom. The senior administration officials said the goal was

to hit those who have benefited financially from Putin's position of power.

"Actions have consequences," said the officials, who weren't authorized to comment by name and briefed reporters on condition of anonymity. "Today's announcement is a result of decisions that the Russian government have made in choosing a path of confrontation."

The sanctions freeze any assets the targeted individuals or firms have in U.S. jurisdictions and prohibits Americans from doing business with them. The officials said, however, the administration would provide guidance to Americans who may currently have business with them about how to wind down that business and avoid violating the sanctions.

Also on the list:

■ Vladimir Bogdanov, director gener-

See **SANCTIONS**, Page 2T



"Imagine women and children not washing for a month because there wasn't drinkable water and they couldn't use the salty water."

Jamal Akchbab, president of an environmental group in Morocco

Rkia Ouabi's home in Zagora, Morocco, does not have water or electricity. She pays for drinking water. SOPHIE NUNNALLY

# People in this country leave the water on in case it flows

Moroccan town went three months last summer without running water

Sophie Nunnally Round Earth Media

ZAGORA, Morocco — When Rkia Ouabi steps past the stark walls of her house to do her shopping, she makes sure to leave the water tap open.

That's the only way to know whether her one source of water — a small hose poking out of a muddy hole in the ground — has come to life.

Nearly every one of the 600 households in her parched neighborhood here in Zagora do the same.

If she returns and sees water pooling in front of her house, she rushes to fill plastic buckets and basins with enough for her daily chores. But her worries don't end there.

This water is too salty to drink, so residents line up to get drinking water from a truck once a week. And last summer, even the salty water wasn't flowing.

Water never has been plentiful on this edge of the

See **MOROCCO**, Page 2T

# Record cold, snow for central, east; soaking for the West

## Winter-like conditions a far cry from usual spring

Doyle Rice  
USA TODAY

T.S. Eliot wrote "April is the cruellest month" and that's certainly proving true for winter-weary folks across the northern U.S., as more waves of bitter cold and heavy snow are in the forecast over the next several days.

Meanwhile, an atmospheric river — aka the Pineapple Express — will pay a

visit to the West Coast this weekend, bringing the threat of heavy rain, flooding and potentially record warm temperatures.

Record cold is possible this weekend all the way from Montana to Wisconsin and as far south as Oklahoma, with temperatures more typical of late January than early April.

Weather Channel meteorologist Michael Palmer called it a "ridiculous late season arctic outbreak," warning that a hard freeze is possible all the way into the Deep South.

The National Weather Service said

high temperatures in the northern and central Plains along with the Upper Mississippi Valley will be nearly 30 degrees below normal Friday. The colder air will flow into areas from New England to the southern Plains by Saturday — with high temperatures ranging from 10 to 20 degrees below normal.

Below-zero wind chills will add to the weather misery. In Montana, the weather service issued a cold advisory for newborn livestock because "these animals are least able to regulate their body temperature and therefore most susceptible to the cold."

Snow will wreak travel havoc in at least 20 states from Montana to Massachusetts.

On Saturday, a swath of heavy snow is likely to spread from the mountains of West Virginia, western Maryland and northwestern Virginia to the upper mid-Atlantic coast and southern New England, AccuWeather said. Yet another snowstorm will wallop the northern Plains and Upper Midwest on Sunday.

The West will endure heavy rain. In portions of northern California burned by recent wildfires, mudslides are a concern, AccuWeather said.

## Sanctions

Continued from Page 1T

al of Surgutneftegaz, a Russia-based oil company.

■ Suleiman Kerimov, a member of the Russian Federal Council, who was detained in France in 2017 for allegedly trying to bring in hundreds of millions of euros in suitcases.

■ Igor Rotenberg, an oil, gas and drilling magnate.

■ Kirill Shamalov, purported husband of Putin's daughter, and an oil and gas baron.

■ Andrei Skoch, deputy of the Russian state Duma, or parliament, who, the officials said, has "longstanding ties to Russian organized criminal groups."

■ Viktor Vekselberg, an energy sector baron, founder and chairman of the Renova Group, comprised of asset management companies and individual funds. Top executives of the company were arrested in 2016 for allegedly brib-

ing officials connected to a power generation project in Russia.

These Russian billionaires, known as oligarchs, got rich buying state-owned enterprises in 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union or later under Putin's rule. The United States is going after them in a bid to shatter their support for the Russian leader.

The senior officials said the new measures, which have been in the works since the past administration, were not in response to any special event or issue "but the totality of the Russian governments increasingly brazen pattern of malign activity across the world."

The officials singled out acts such as the annexation of Crimea, the supplying of weapons to the Syrian regime of President Bashar Assad and the meddling in the 2016 U.S. elections as well as money laundering.

Among the firms sanctioned is Rosoboronekспорт, a state-owned Russian weapons trading company. Officials said the firm has longstanding and ongoing ties to the Syrian government, with billions of dollars' worth of weapons sales over more than a decade.

Among the government officials on the list are Vladimir Kolokoltsev, minister of Internal Affairs and General Police of the Russian Federation; Alexey Dyumin, governor of Russia's Tula region, who previously headed the Special Operations Forces; and Mikhail Fradkov, president of the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies, a major research and analytical center established by the President of the Russian Federation.

Also included are Timur Valiulin, the head of the General Administration for Combating Extremism within Russia's Ministry of Interior; Evgeniy Shkolov, a Putin aide; and Konstantin Kosachev; chairperson of the Council of the Federation Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Putin needs the loyalty of the targeted oligarchs and gives them financial benefits in return, said Alina Polyakova, an analyst at the Brookings Institution think tank. "Personal sanctions try to put a crack in that web of loyalty." They send a message: "You're rich because of Putin, but you're going to get hurt because of Putin, too. ... These are the people we should be targeting," she said.



Sayid Abdeljahil, a shopkeeper, was a leader of the recent local protests for water in Zagora. SOPHIE NUNNALLY

## Morocco

Continued from Page 1T

desert. The region historically gets a little more than 2 inches of rain a year. Until recently, residents were able to get by.

Date palms are accustomed to the climate and still flourish in places. But water shortages from climate change and large-scale commercial agriculture sparked protests last year that may be a sign of things to come as water becomes more scarce — in Morocco and elsewhere.

The United Nations says 40% of the global population is affected by water shortages, and the numbers are rising. Thousands of miles south of Zagora, residents of Cape Town, South Africa, have cut back massively to avoid running out of water. Officials there warn that shortages will be the new norm. A global list of cities facing future water shortages includes Beijing, Moscow, London, Tokyo and Miami.

Residents angry over a lack of water last summer conducted sit-ins and protests. Police blocked streets to prevent people from gathering. They arrested 23 men for participating in an unauthorized protest when more unrest broke out in late September and early October, said Atmane Rizkou, president of a local human rights group. Similar protests were reported in other parts of Morocco.

Zagora, a town of 25,000, had no running water for three months last summer, said Jamal Akhbab, president of a local environmental group. "Imagine women and children not washing for a month because there wasn't drinkable water and they couldn't use the salty water," he said.

After the protests, the government quickly dug public wells to a depth of 656 feet — the same depth as irrigation wells.

Water in the city now runs for half the day at unspecified hours — and is too salty to drink, explained Ouabi, 60, who pays about \$30 a week for drinking water, a huge sum for her.

Ouabi said she would leave if she could. But no one wants to buy a house without water or electricity.

The situation is unlikely to improve, especially with the signs of global warming already present. The U.S. Agency for International Development said temperatures across Morocco have risen by 1 degree Celsius since 1960, and will rise by another 1 to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2050 — even more in the interior. Precipitation in the Sahara region will decrease by 30% this century.

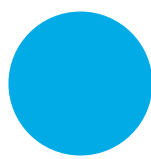
Sayid Abdeljahil, 29, a shopkeeper here and a leader of the water protests, said people just want what they regard as a basic human right.

"This is why we should ask the question, 'Are we human beings?'" he said. "Are we really human beings if we are treated this way?"

Contributing: Yassine Chaoui

### Corrections & Clarifications

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Former South Korean President Park Geun-hye, left, was sentenced Friday to 24 years in prison on 16 corruption-related counts. AHN YOUNG-JOON/AP

## Former South Korean president sentenced to 24 years, fined \$17M

Thomas Maresca  
Special to USA TODAY

SEOUL — Former South Korean leader Park Geun-hye was sentenced to 24 years in prison and fined almost \$17 million Friday, the culmination of a stunning fall from grace for the nation's first female president.

The sentence, handed down at Seoul Central District Court, appeared to be the final chapter in a corruption investigation that began in 2016. The scandal surrounding Park and her closest confidante would ultimately ensnare several of South Korea's top officials and business leaders in a web of bribery and graft.

Park was impeached by lawmakers in December 2016 following months of massive street protests. A criminal trial was launched in May 2017, and Park was found guilty of 16 corruption-related counts, including bribery, coercion and abuse of power.

Prosecutors had requested a 30-year sentence.

Business leaders from powerful Korean conglomerates Samsung and Lotte were also tried and convicted during the course of Park's trial, as was her confi-

dante, Choi Soon-sil, a longtime friend of Park who used her tremendous influence over the president to enrich herself and her family.

Park did not appear at the sentencing, which was televised live, and refused to participate in her criminal trial since October. She has one week to appeal the verdict.

Park is the daughter of former President Park Chung-hee, a dictator who ruled the nation for 18 years until his assassination in 1979.

A spokesperson for current President Moon Jae-in said in a statement that Friday's proceedings were "heart-breaking," and vowed that its lessons would be remembered.

"History that is not remembered is said to repeat itself," the statement read. "We will not forget today."

Park Geun-hye is not the only former South Korean president to face criminal charges. Her predecessor, Lee Myung-bak, was arrested last month on a raft of corruption allegations, including bribery, embezzlement and tax evasion.

Two former presidents were convicted of bribery and treason in 1996, but were both pardoned a year later.

## Poisoned Russian ex-spy Sergei Skripal 'improving'

U.N. Security Council to discuss issue next week

Jane Onyanga-Omara  
USA TODAY

LONDON — Sergei Skripal, the Russian former double agent poisoned by a nerve agent in Britain, is no longer in critical condition, a senior health official said.

Skripal is "responding well to treatment" and "improving rapidly," said Christine Blanshard, Salisbury District Hospital's medical director.

Skripal, 66, and his daughter Yulia, 33, were found unresponsive on a bench in Salisbury, a city in southern England, on March 4.

Yulia Skripal said in a statement distributed by police Thursday that she woke up over a week ago and "am glad to say my strength is growing daily."

The Russian Embassy in the United Kingdom tweeted: "Good news!" in response to a tweet by Sky News about Sergei Skripal's improved condition.

"As Yulia herself says, her strength is growing daily and she can look forward to the day when she is well enough to leave the hospital," Blanshard said Friday.

"Any speculation on when that date will be is just that — speculation," she added.

The United Kingdom has blamed Russia for the Skripals' poisoning with Novichok nerve agent. The Kremlin denies any responsibility.

More than 25 countries including Britain and the United States have expelled over 150 Russian diplomats because of the incident, while Russia has retaliated by expelling foreign envoys.

Russia called a U.N. Security Council meeting Thursday over the poisonings. Vassily Nebenzia, the Russian ambassador to the U.N., called Britain's claims a "fake story."

"We have told our British colleagues that they are playing with fire and they will be sorry," he said.

Alexander Yakovenko, Russia's am-



Former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal is said to be responding well to treatment. YURI SENATOROV/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

bassador to the U.K., said his country will not accept Britain's conclusions unless Russian investigators are allowed to inspect the evidence, have access to the Skripals and participate in the probe. Russia has also asked to examine pets found in Sergei Skripal's home.

The British government said two guinea pigs belonging to Sergei Skripal were found dead at his home, apparently of thirst, and his cat was put down after it was found in a "distressed" state. Authorities sealed off Skripal's home in the aftermath of the poisoning.

A spokesperson from the Russian Embassy in London said Skripal's niece, Viktoria, had said there were two cats and two guinea pigs living at his home.

"To better understand what happened to Sergey and Yulia Skripal, it is essential to know if the animals also suffered from chemical poisoning. We have therefore officially requested the Foreign Office to provide us with the respective information, including on whether the animals are receiving any treatment," the spokesperson said Thursday, before the pets' deaths were announced.

## NEWS

# Pruitt's ethical challenges at EPA rising

But Trump calls him a victim 'under siege'

Ledyard King  
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Scott Pruitt's future as EPA administrator is on shaky ground over a series of ethical lapses and questionable spending that prompted several Republicans to join Democratic lawmakers and environmental groups to demand his ouster.

President Trump has continued to back his embattled Cabinet member so far, praising him for being "very courageous" and doing a "fantastic job," even as word that key White House officials are angry at Pruitt. On Friday, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Chief of Staff John F. Kelly urged Trump to fire him.

On Friday, the president came to Pruitt's defense.

In a tweet pushing back on earlier media reports that he was considering replacing Attorney General Jeff Sessions with Pruitt, Trump characterized Pruitt as a victim who is "TOTALLY under siege."

But the president's endorsement hasn't stopped more Republicans in Congress from joining the Pruitt-must-go chorus. At a town hall meeting Thursday, New York GOP Rep. Elise Stefanik called for his resignation, becoming the third Republican House member to do so.

Here's a rundown of some issues for which Pruitt is criticized:

## Lobbyist's apartment rental

Pruitt paid \$50 a night to rent a room on Capitol Hill in an apartment owned by the wife of a major energy lobbyist. He used it beginning in February 2017 when he became EPA administrator and paid only on the nights he stayed until he moved out in July of that year.

The total he paid over the six months



Criticism of EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt has escalated even as he continues to be defended by President Trump. JACK GRUBER/USA TODAY NETWORK

**Pruitt blames the "toxicity" of Washington for contributing to the firestorm surrounding him as EPA head and says the criticism is "about the mission we're engaged in here."**

was roughly \$6,100, well below what he would have had to pay to rent a one-bedroom Capitol Hill apartment for the same period. In addition, his adult daughter stayed in a separate bedroom while she interned during the summer for the White House, according to reports.

EPA's senior ethics official, Kevin Minoli, recently reviewed the lease — months after Pruitt had vacated the apartment — and initially deemed the arrangement did not violate agency rules on accepting gifts.

Several days later, Minoli said he didn't have all the facts surrounding the deal.

The White House launched its own investigation.

## Raises for top aides

Over White House objections, Pruitt pushed for hefty raises to two long-time aides, Sarah Greenwalt and Millan Hupp.

Greenwalt and Hupp came with him from Oklahoma where he was attorney general, according to *The Atlantic*.

The agency circumvented the White House by providing the raises through a provision of the Safe Drinking Water Act that allows the EPA administrator hiring flexibility, according to a report in the magazine.

Questioned during an interview Wednesday on Fox News, Pruitt said he was unaware of the back-door raises and put an immediate stop to them.

## First-class travel

Pruitt spent \$105,000 on luxury air travel during his first year in office.

Agency officials said the EPA administrator needed to fly business or first class on a number of flights because of security concerns posed by fellow travelers, according to a March 20 letter the agency sent to South Carolina GOP Rep. Trey Gowdy, chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

Traveling near the front of the plane "allows the Administrator's security agents to expeditiously exit with him upon the occurrence of a threat," Associate EPA Administrator Troy M. Lyons wrote in the letter.

## Secure phone booth

Pruitt had a secure, soundproof phone booth installed in his office at a cost of roughly \$43,000, according to *The Washington Post*.

EPA officials have said Pruitt needed a secure communications area in his office for private calls with White House officials and others in the administration.

During a House Energy and Commerce Committee hearing in December, Pruitt defended the installation.

"There are secure conversations that need to take place at times," he told lawmakers.

## Ignoring the White House

Pruitt has run afoul of key White House staff like Kelly.

Pruitt's decision to go on Fox News to defend himself was opposed by senior administration officials, according to a report in *The Washington Post*.

During the interview where he showed no contrition, Pruitt blamed the "toxicity" of Washington for contributing to the firestorm and said the criticism is "about the mission we're engaged in here."

## Paul makes baby gender reveal for couple

Ky. senator takes up constituent's request

Thomas Novelly  
Louisville Courier Journal

LOUISVILLE — Is it a boy? Is it a girl? Is it a Libertarian?

A couple from La Grange, Kentucky, took their gender reveal announcement to a political level when they asked U.S. Sen. Rand Paul to take a picture announcing their baby's name.



The Kentucky Republican took a picture with a sign that read "Honored to have the LIBERTY to introduce Robin Harper Morris."

While she's 18 years, and a few months, away from being able to vote, Paul has definitely locked down this baby's ballot.

Chelsea Morris, Robin's mother, was ecstatic.

"Less than three months and Robin Harper Morris will be joining our little family!" Chelsea Morris posted on Facebook. "And who better to announce the arrival of our baby girl but Senator Rand Paul?"

Chelsea Morris' husband John Morris, a retired Army veteran, reached out to the senator's office asking for help, according to spokeswoman Kelsey Cooper.

She said it was too cute to pass up.

"Constituents reach out to us all the time," Cooper said. "... The staff talked about it, and we knew we couldn't turn it down."

Cooper said Paul was more than happy to make the announcement.

There's no word on if Robin Morris will read the omnibus spending bill as her first book. Perhaps Paul's Twitter version would be more entertaining.



Michael Brown was accepted by 20 schools. YINYANG/GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

## Texas teen offered full ride to 20 universities

Lauren Talarico  
KHOU-TV, Houston

HOUSTON — Lamar High School student Michael Brown knows he'll be enrolled in one of America's top universities next year, he just has to decide which one.

Brown, who grew up in the economically challenged Third Ward in Houston, worked for years to get into Stanford University.

He not only got into Stanford, but all 20 colleges he applied to, including four Ivy League schools: Harvard University, Yale University, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Northwestern University, Georgetown University, Vanderbilt University, Johns Hopkins University, Pomona College, Claremont McKenna College, Williams College, University of Texas-Austin, University of California-Berkeley, Amherst, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Tulane University, University of Michigan, UC-Davis, UC-Irvine.

In 2017, the average high school GPA to get into Harvard was 4.10, Yale: 4.19, Princeton: 3.90; Michael's is 4.68.

He also participates in several extracurricular activities including Lamar's Varsity Debate Team, the Key Club, Young Democrats, Houston Independent School District's Emergent program and 100 Black Men of Houston, just to name a few.

In addition, he has worked with several political campaigns.

Brown would like to study political science, then earn a law degree. Eventually, he'd like to work at a law firm and run for public office.

"Politics is the route for making changes on a bigger scale and working with people in the community," he said.

Brown largely credits his motivation to his mother, Berthinia.

"When I was in elementary school, I saw my mom graduate from community college and that just meant a lot to me," said Brown.

"Michael is my rainbow baby," said Berthinia. "I lost three babies before I had Michael. So, I just wanted to be the best mother that I could be to him. I wanted to make sure that he had stability."

Michael was offered full rides to each school, plus \$260,000 he earned in scholarships.

He hopes his accomplishment will serve as motivation to other kids in the Third Ward or wherever they may be.

"Be helpful. Dream big. Don't be afraid," Brown said. "Be proud of your family, love yourself, love your community and then share your story. Inspire other people to really reach for the stars and achieve their dreams."

Brown has not decided which school he will attend. He has to make a decision by May 1.

## 7-year-old is youngest girl to climb Kilimanjaro

Feat with her mother honors deceased dad

Mary Bowerman  
USA TODAY

A 7-year-old Texas girl made history last month when she became the youngest girl to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, according to a guide website that tracks Kilimanjaro records.

Montannah Kenney of Austin climbed the 19,341-foot mountain with her mother, Hollie Kenney, who is a former professional triathlete, according to Austin360. The duo climbed the mountain to honor Montannah's dad, who passed away when she was 3.

"The higher I go, the closer I am to him in heaven," Montannah told Austin360.

According to Climb Mount Kilimanjaro, Montannah came close to becoming the youngest male or female to ever reach the summit. She trained by hiking around the Austin area with her mother.

Two other 7-year-olds have summited Kilimanjaro: Keats Boyd and Cash Callahan, according to the website. Keats, the website said, was the first but it's unknown if he's older or younger than Montannah. Cash, meanwhile, was a month younger than her when he reached the summit.

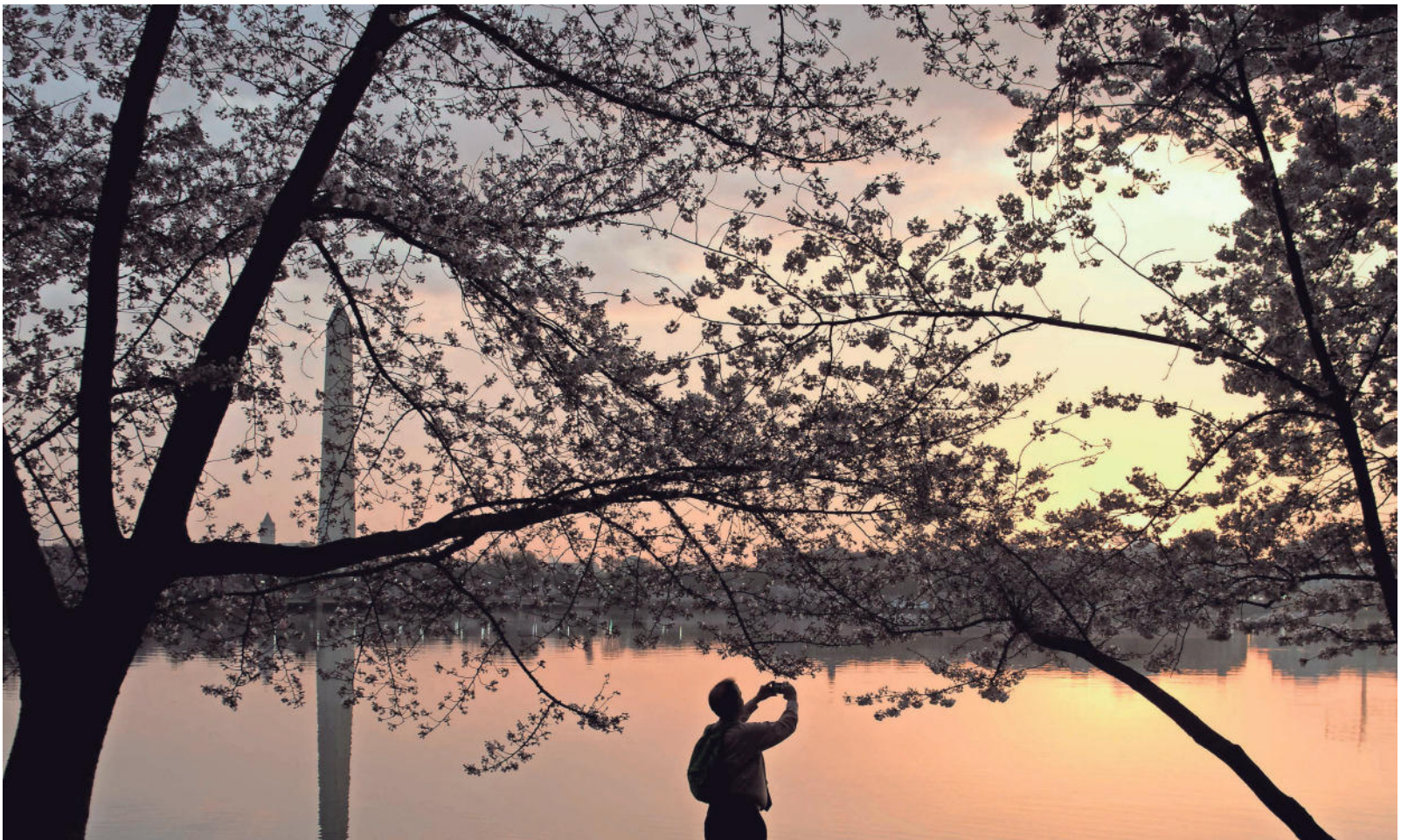


Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania is 19,341 feet high. MICATO SAFARIS

NEWS



Cherry blossoms can be seen in bloom in front of the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. MICHAEL REYNOLDS/EPA-EFE



A man photographs the cherry blossom trees around the Tidal Basin at sunrise in Washington D.C. SAUL LOEB/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

# D.C. cherry blossoms reach their peak



A woman takes notice of the blooming cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin. SAUL LOEB/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

## MONEYLINE

## BEST BUY SHOPPERS INFO MAY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED

Retailer Best Buy says [24]7.ai, a company that provides the technology backing its chat services, was hacked between Sept. 27 and Oct. 12, potentially jeopardizing the personal payment details of “a number of Best Buy customers.” Sears and Delta Air Lines have also said thousands of their customers may have been similarly exposed because of [24]7.ai’s breach.

## JOHNSON &amp; JOHNSON HIT WITH \$37M VERDICT IN SUIT

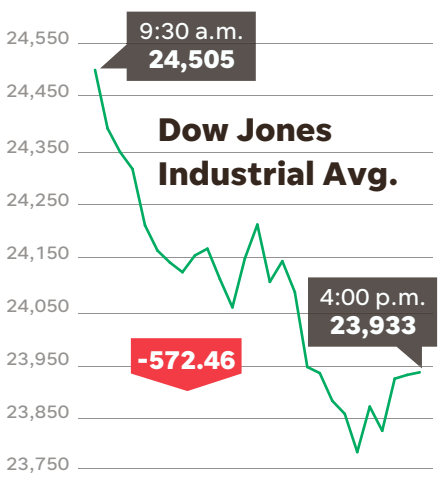
Johnson & Johnson and its talc supplier have been hit with a \$37 million verdict in compensatory damages over claims a New Jersey man contracted cancer from using the health care giant’s talc powder products that contained asbestos. A jury in Middlesex County, N.J., Superior court found J&J responsible for 70% of the damages and Imerys SA, the France-based talc supplier, responsible for 30%.

## FORD RECALLS ABOUT 350,000 F-150S, EXPEDITIONS

Ford is recalling 350,000 vehicles for a transmission issue that could result in the car moving after the driver has placed it in park and removed the keys. The recall applies to some 2018 Ford F-150 trucks and 2018 Expedition SUVs with a 10-speed automatic transmission and some 2018 Ford F-650 and F-750 vehicles with 6-speed automatic transmissions. Reference number for the recall is 18S10.

## REPORT: GEORGE SOROS MAY INVEST IN CRYPTOCURRENCY

George Soros apparently has had a change of heart on cryptocurrency. The billionaire investor’s family fund is set to begin investing in the virtual currency, according to Bloomberg. Soros told journalists in January at the World Economic Forum “cryptocurrency is a typical bubble” and “it is not a currency,” the *Financial Times* said.



## Friday markets

INDEX	CLOSE	CHG
Nasdaq composite	6915.11	▼ 161.44
S&P 500	2604.47	▼ 58.37
T-note, 10-year yield	2.78%	▼ 0.05
Oil, light sweet crude	\$62.06	▼ 1.48
Gold, oz. Comex	\$1331.90	▲ 7.60
Euro (dollars per euro)	\$1.2285	▲ 0.0049
Yen per dollar	106.85	▼ 0.60

SOURCES: USA TODAY RESEARCH, MARKETWATCH.COM

## USA SNAPSHOTS®



SOURCE: *Forbes*  
JAE YANG, JANET LOEHRKE/USA TODAY

# Dow falls 572 points amid Trump, China trade fracas

## Tit-for-tat tariff threats keep investors on edge

Adam Shell  
USA TODAY

U.S. stocks closed sharply lower Friday as Wall Street reacted to the latest escalation in the trade fight between the U.S. and China.

Investor jitters were elevated on the final trading day of the week after Beijing vowed to fight back against the Trump administration’s latest threats of yet more tariffs on Chinese imports, renewing investor fears that the brewing battle between the world’s two biggest economies could result in a full-fledged trade war.

“Escalation of the U.S.-China dispute has entered a new phase,” David Fernandez of Barclays Bank in Singapore told clients in a report.

The Dow Jones industrial average had another rough day, tumbling as much as 767 points at its low before recouping some of its losses and closing down 572 points, or 2.3%, at 23,932.76. Leading the decline were airplane giant Boeing, which fell 3.1%, and heavy-equipment maker Caterpillar, which declined 3.5%. Both companies are at risk because of their higher international sales and exposure to China.

For the week, the Dow fell 0.7%.

U.S.-China trade tensions stepped up another notch after President Trump late Thursday instructed the U.S. trade representative “to consider” slapping an extra \$100 billion in tariffs on Chinese goods. China responded by indicating it wouldn’t back down, saying it would fight back “at any cost,” according to a statement from the Commerce Ministry.

The surprise move was a further escalation of the deepening dispute between the two economic powers, which just days earlier announced plans for \$50 billion in import duties on each other’s goods. The earlier tariff



The New York Stock Exchange was not a good place to be Friday. RICHARD DREW/AP

threats roiled financial markets but stocks had rebounded Thursday on investor hopes that the parties would find a diplomatic solution.

Comments from Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin failed to calm investor fears. In an interview on CNBC, he reiterated that the “(U.S.) is not in a trade war” but wouldn’t rule out that the current tit-for-tat between the two countries “is not the beginning of one.”

Investors fear a trade war because it will restrict the flow of goods between the nations, which will not only hurt sales and corporate profits but also dent investor confidence.

Despite short-term market turbulence, investment pros are hopeful a full-fledged trade war will not break out.

“Our view remains that a negotiated solution is most likely, and so the tariffs ultimately won’t be implemented or will be much milder if they are,” said Shane Oliver, head of investment strategy at AMP Capital in Sydney. “However, negotiations could take months. In the meantime, there will be ongoing noise around the issue,” and financial markets will remain volatile.”

But other investment pros are getting nervous and worry that the heated rhetoric could suggest that this is more than just negotiating tactics. “The global trade war is moving from myth to reality,” Peter Rosenstreich of Swissquote Bank, an online bank in Switzerland, told USA TODAY in an email.

Contributing: *The Associated Press*

## Facebook tightens ad rules to prevent election interference

Mike Snider  
USA TODAY

In the wake of waves of criticism, Facebook continues to institute more changes to its platform — including new stringent rules for those placing issue-based ads — in an effort to thwart future election interference.

Advertisers who want to run political or issue-ads on Facebook now must have their identity and location verified, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in a post Friday.

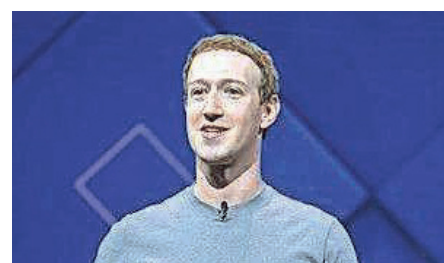
“Any advertiser who doesn’t pass will be prohibited from running political or issue ads,” wrote Zuckerberg, who is scheduled to appear before Congress next week. “We will also label them and advertisers will have to show who paid for them.”

Political and issue ads proved especially powerful in the 2016 presidential election, and there are fears of a repeat of such influence over this fall’s mid-term elections.

Last fall, Facebook told lawmakers it would tighten its ad policies after disclosing that more than 3,000 ads were bought by 470 fake accounts and pages run by the Internet Research Agency, a shadowy organization in St. Petersburg, Russia. Those ads targeted Facebook users on hot-button subjects including gun rights, gay rights, religion and presidential candidates Trump and Hillary Clinton.

Facebook subsequently revealed that the reach of those ads exceeded what it had originally stated, impacting 146 million Americans.

“Facebook’s announcement that they will include issue ads in their forthcoming transparency tool, and has endorsed the enactment of the Honest Ads Act, is a welcome step and will add to public awareness about who is paying for advertising content



CEO Mark Zuckerberg will appear before Congress next week. FACEBOOK

on the platform,” Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., said in a statement. Schiff is the highest ranking Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, one of three congressional committees investigating Russian interference in the 2016 election.

The Kremlin-linked IRA, he said, “took advantage of contentious political issues to divide Americans through social media advertising - this move by Facebook will help blunt those attempts in the future.”

Facebook will work with third parties to develop a list of key issues to track, Rob Goldman, vice president of ads, and Alex Himel, vice president of local ad pages, said in a separate post on the Facebook blog.

Ads will be clearly labeled with “paid for by” information later this spring, the company says. And a searchable political ads archive will be available by June. Facebook plans to hire more people and have these measures operational “in time for the critical months before the 2018 elections.”

In recent days, Zuckerberg and Facebook have publicly attempted to face the fallout and scrutiny from a burgeoning crisis. On Wednesday, the company said up to 87 million people, mostly in the U.S., may have had their data improperly shared by political targeting firm Cambridge Analytica.

## Nine West is latest retailer in bankruptcy

Nathan Bomey  
USA TODAY

Women’s apparel and shoe retailer Nine West Holdings filed for bankruptcy protection Friday as traditional stores struggle to get back on their feet amid declining mall traffic.

The retailer, which also operates the Anne Klein and Gloria Vanderbilt brands and has already closed 71 stores, said it had secured bankruptcy financing to continue operating while it seeks to shed debt.

The company has reached a tentative deal to sell its Nine West and Bandalino footwear and handbag business to conglomerate Authentic Brands Group, which controls the brands of Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, Muhammad Ali and others.

A bankruptcy judge would have to approve that deal now that Nine West is in Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization, and it’s possible a more lucrative alternative could emerge.

Nine West products are sold in more than 1,200 locations despite the closure of 71 standalone locations, spokesperson Ruth Pachman said in an email.

The sale and bankruptcy could position the retailer to emerge as a healthier company focused on several key brands, including Anne Klein.

But Chapter 11 bankruptcy is a perilous place, and it doesn’t always work out as executives hope. Look no further than Toys R Us, which filed for bankruptcy in September with hopes of surviving but recently moved to liquidate.

Nine West joins a list of footwear retailers to recently plunge into bankruptcy, including Payless ShoeSource in 2017.

**MONEY**

# Employers added 103K jobs in March as weather curbs hiring

Paul Davidson  
USA TODAY

Employers added a disappointing 103,000 jobs in March as colder weather appeared to crimp hiring after solid employment gains the first two months of the year. The unemployment rate, which is calculated from a different survey, was unchanged at 4.1%, the Labor Department said Friday.

Economists expected 185,000 new jobs, according to a Bloomberg survey. In February, unseasonably warm weather pulled forward hiring in industries such as construction and retail, leading to job gains that topped 300,000. Some economists forecast a sharp offsetting slow-down to 150,000 or less in March. As a result, the weak showing is being viewed as a blip rather than a sign of a weakening labor market.

"The labor market is in very good shape," says Joel Naroff, head of Naroff Economic Advisors.

**Wage growth edges up:** Sharper pay increases have been the biggest missing link in an otherwise robust labor market. In March, average hourly earnings increased 8 cents to \$26.82, pushing the annual gain to 2.7% from 2.6%. Economists, and workers, are seeking bigger pay hikes as the low unemployment rate forces employers to struggle to find qualified job candidates.

The March advance represents a middle ground that marks a steady increase without raising alarm bells among Federal Reserve policymakers.

**Industries that led the way:** Health care led the gains, adding 34,000 jobs. Professional and business services added 33,000 and manufacturing,

22,000. But in a sign that weather played a big role, construction lost 15,000 jobs, retail lost 4,400, and leisure and hospitality, which includes restaurants and bars, added 5,000.

**Bright spots:** The unemployment rate was unchanged at a 17-year low of 4.1% for a sixth consecutive month. But a broader measure of joblessness that includes part-time workers who prefer full-time jobs and discouraged workers who have stopped looking fell to 8% from 8.2%. The ranks of those "involuntary" part-time workers shrank by 141,000.

Also, the unemployment rate for Americans without a high school diploma fell sharply, to 5.5% from 5.7%. Unemployment for high school graduates dipped to 4.3% from 4.4%. The tight labor market appears to be benefiting people with less education who are being hired in greater numbers as low unemployment shrinks the pool of job candidates.

**What it all means:** At first glance, the report was a downer. Not only were job gains disappointing in March, but total additions for January and February were revised down by 50,000.

Yet weather was the main reason for March's poor performance. And payroll gains for the first three months of the year still averaged a very healthy 202,000, up from 182,000 last year. It takes only 80,000 new jobs a month to keep the unemployment rate from rising, and significantly higher totals will almost certainly keep pushing it down.

"We see nothing to change our view that the Fed will hike" interest rates again in June, RDO Economics wrote in a note to clients.



CHARLES KRUPA/AP

# Fed's Powell says trade flap doesn't dim outlook

Paul Davidson  
USA TODAY

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Friday the escalating trade feud between the U.S. and China hasn't dimmed the central bank's near-term economic outlook, though business leaders are warning of increasing risks.

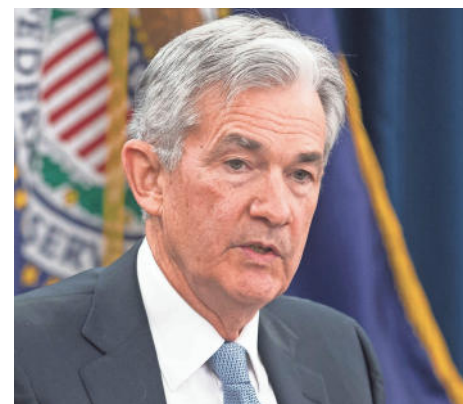
"The discussion about trade is at a relatively early stage," Powell said at the Economic Club of Chicago. "People really don't see yet any impact for the near-term outlook." He said Fed officials don't know if the proposed tariffs will be enacted or the ultimate amount. Powell added that business leaders have told Fed officials "that changes in trade policy have become a risk to the medium-term outlook."

President Trump on Thursday threatened to slap an additional \$100 billion in tariffs on Chinese goods, prompting the Chinese Commerce Ministry to declare it would fight back "at any cost."

Trump's latest threat followed China's vow to hit U.S. shipments to the country with \$50 billion in tariffs in response to similar-sized tariffs Trump promised to impose on Chinese imports. The two sides, however, have said they intend to negotiate to try to avoid tariffs. Trump says he aims to narrow the country's \$340 billion trade deficit with China and prod the country to stop swiping U.S. intellectual property.

Economists have said the initial threats of \$50 billion in tariffs by both the U.S. and China would have little impact on U.S. economic growth, but there could be more tangible effects if the flap escalates.

Powell on Friday also laid out an up-



Fed Chief Jerome Powell said he expects the labor market to remain strong. MICHAEL REYNOLDS/EPA-EFE

beat view of the economy and said the Fed plans to continue to raise interest rates gradually.

Fed policymakers believe that "as long as the economy continues broadly on its current path, further gradual increases in the federal funds rate will best promote" a sustained economic expansion, a strong labor market and 2% inflation, Powell told the audience.

He added, "The labor market has been strong, and my colleagues and I (on the Fed's policymaking committee) expect it to remain strong."

Powell didn't shed any light on whether he expects the policymaking committee to raise rates three or four times this year. Fed officials stuck to their forecast of three hikes at a March 20-21 meeting but seven policymakers now expect four rate increases, up from four policymakers in December, amid federal tax cuts and spending increases.

At the March meeting, the Fed lifted its benchmark rate by a quarter percentage point for the sixth time since the financial crisis, to a range of 1.5% to 1.75%.

## AMERICA'S MARKETS

ALL THE MARKET ACTION IN REAL TIME  
MARKETS.USATODAY.COM

**DJIA**  
**-572.46**

**DOW JONES**  
INDUSTRIAL AVERAGE  
CLOSE: 23,932.76  
%CHANGE: -2.3%  
YTD % CHG: -3.2%

**SPX**  
**-58.37**

**S&P 500**  
STANDARD & POOR'S  
CLOSE: 2,604.47  
%CHANGE: -2.2%  
YTD % CHG: -2.6%

**COMP**  
**-161.44**

**NASDAQ**  
COMPOSITE  
CLOSE: 6,915.11  
%CHANGE: -2.3%  
YTD % CHG: +2%

**RUT**  
**-29.63**

**RUSSELL**  
RUSSELL 2000 INDEX  
CLOSE: 1,513.30  
%CHANGE: -1.9%  
YTD % CHG: -1.5%

**THE MOTLEY FOOL**  
A FOOLISH TAKE

## Bull market could survive 2018's slump

Dan Caplinger  
The Motley Fool

Investors were sad to see March end on a down note for the stock market. The Dow Jones industrial average finished the quarter off more than 600 points from where it started the year.

The downward move to begin 2018 ended a streak of nine consecutive quarters of gains for the Dow. During that time period, the average rose more than 8,400 points, making up almost half of the Dow's entire gain of roughly 18,000 points throughout the course of a nine-year bull market. Some fear the end of the streak could signal the beginning of a new bear market.

To counter that bearishness, some historical perspective is helpful. The last time the Dow had a streak this long was from 1995 to 1997, when the average rose 11 quarters in a row. After the down quarter that ended the streak, the Dow bounced back the following quarter with a gain of more than 11%. Despite further volatility, the average eventually climbed more than 45%, from around 7,900 at the end of 1997 to almost 11,500 by the end of 1999.

Fearful investors will always find reasons to be nervous about the market's future. Yet over long periods, stocks have shown a level of stability that has always helped them bounce back from declines.

That's no guarantee the bull market will last another two years and add further huge gains, but it does point to the likelihood long-term investors will be happy with their future returns.

*Dan Caplinger and The Motley Fool have no position in any of the stocks mentioned.*

**S&P 500'S BIGGEST GAINERS/LOSERS**

GAINERS		Company (ticker symbol)	Price	\$ Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg
	<b>Ventas (VTR)</b>	Positive company note, shares jump premarket.	50.42	+0.38	+0.8	-16.0
	<b>Ulta Beauty (ULTA)</b>	Positive company note, shares make up midday loss.	208.26	+1.34	+0.6	-6.9
	<b>Campbell Soup (CPB)</b>	Shares rise after leadership change plans.	43.73	+0.25	+0.6	-9.1
	<b>Welltower (WELL)</b>	Shares make up loss in negative environment.	55.01	+0.28	+0.5	-13.7
	<b>Essex Property Trust (ESS)</b>	Solid sector, stock retains premarket jump.	242.38	+0.88	+0.4	+4
	<b>Viacom (VIAB)</b>	Stock finishes strong amid CBS merger talks.	30.90	+0.13	+0.4	+3
	<b>NetApp (NTAP)</b>	Shares gain, company revises outlook up on analyst day.	63.11	+0.21	+0.3	+14.1
	<b>Darden Restaurants (DRI)</b>	Announces ex-dividend, stock has strong finish.	86.86	+0.19	+0.2	-9.5
	<b>HCP (HCP)</b>	Shares rise after earnings call announcement.	23.20	+0.04	+0.2	-11.0
	<b>General Mills (GIS)</b>	Positive company note overcomes rating downgrade.	45.47	+0.04	+0.1	-23.3
LOSERS		Company (ticker symbol)	Price	\$ Chg	% Chg	YTD % Chg
	<b>Incyte (INCY)</b>	Cancer drug combination with Merck fails.	64.02	-19.05	-22.9	-32.4
	<b>Nektar Therapeutics (NKTR)</b>	Cautious analyst and weak peers push shares lower.	93.87	-7.57	-7.5	+57.2
	<b>Xilinx (XLNX)</b>	Stock rating cut to underweight at JPMorgan.	66.30	-4.40	-6.2	-1.7
	<b>Dover (DOV)</b>	Negative environment, drops most in more than a year.	93.19	-4.50	-4.6	-7.7
	<b>CF Industries (CF)</b>	Shares near month's low as trade dispute deepens.	36.83	-1.75	-4.5	-13.4
	<b>Concho Resources (CXO)</b>	Rating lowered to sector perform in losing sector.	133.63	-6.02	-4.3	-11.0
	<b>KLA-Tencor (KLAC)</b>	Sector weakness continues but erases week's dip.	104.07	-4.64	-4.3	-1.0
	<b>Kohl's (KSS)</b>	Shares dip premarket and erase April's gain.	64.00	-2.91	-4.3	+18.0
	<b>Charles Schwab (SCHW)</b>	Stock slides as company reports monthly activity report.	50.11	-2.24	-4.3	-2.5
	<b>Freeport-McMoRan (FCX)</b>	Losing sector, shares fall, evens April.	17.33	-0.78	-4.3	-8.6

SOURCE: Bloomberg and The Associated Press

**MARKET PERFORMANCE BY SECTOR**

Sector	Close	Chg.	4wk <sup>1</sup>	YTD <sup>1</sup>
Consumer discret.	100.68	-2.19	-5.2%	+2.0%
Technology	64.05	-1.61	-9.2%	+0.2%
Financials	27.17	-0.67	-8.5%	-2.7%
Health care	79.88	-1.97	-7.7%	-3.4%
Industrials	72.77	-2.07	-7.2%	-3.8%
Utilities	50.42	-0.40	+2.1%	-4.3%
Telecom	57.40	-0.49	-2.7%	-5.2%
Materials	56.51	-1.41	-7.8%	-6.6%
Energy	67.35	-1.24	-1.6%	-6.8%
Consumer staples	52.42	-0.54	-4.0%	-7.9%

**MARKET NOTEBOOK**

Issues	NYSE	NASDAQ
Advancing	597	606
Declining	2,266	2,233
Unchanged	153	216
Total	3,016	3,055

Issues at		
New 52 Week High	29	39
New 52 Week Low	49	53

Share Volume		
Total	3,286,666,947	2,332,978,578
Advancing	303,987,724	690,298,588
Declining	2,947,847,646	1,621,304,172
Unchanged	34,831,577	21,375,818

**TOP 10 EXCHANGE TRADED FUNDS**

ETF, ranked by volume	Ticker	Close	Chg.	% Chg	%YTD
SPDR S&P500 ETF Tr	SPY	259.72	-5.92	-2.2%	-2.7%
SPDR Financial	XLF	27.17	-0.67	-2.4%	-2.7%
CS VS 2x Vix ShTm	TVIX	10.34	+1.04	+11.2%	+86.6%
iShs Emerg Mkts	EEM	47.08	-0.94	-2.0%	-0.1%
PowerShs QQQ Trust	QQQ	156.63	-4.02	-2.5%	+0.6%
ProShs Ultra VIX ST	UVXY	19.92	+1.62	+8.9%	+95.1%
Barc iPath Vix ST	VXX	49.76	+2.80	+6.0%	+78.2%
iShs China Large Cap	FXI	45.97	-1.02	-2.2%	-0.4%
VanE Vect Gld Miners	GDX	22.07	+0.10	+0.5%	-5.0%
ProShs UltraPro ShtQQQ	SQQQ	19.39	+1.34	+7.4%	-9.9%

**INTEREST RATES**

Type	Close	6 mo ago
Prime lending	4.75%	4.25%
Federal funds	1.69%	1.16%
3 mo. T-bill	1.71%	1.06%
5 yr. T-note	2.59%	1.97%
10 yr. T-note	2.78%	2.36%

**MORTGAGE RATES**

Type	Close	6 mo ago
30 yr. fixed	4.29%	3.86%
15 yr. fixed	3.68%	3.11%
1 yr. ARM	3.83%	3.19%
5/1 ARM	4.02%	3.39%

SOURCE: BANKRATE.COM

**COMMODITIES**

Commodities	Close	Prev.	Chg.	% Chg.	% YTD
Cattle (lb.)	1.12	1.14	-0.02	-1.8%	-8.8%
Corn (bushel)	3.89	3.90	-0.01	-0.3%	+10.8%
Gold (troy oz.)	1,331.90	1,324.30	+7.60	+0.6%	+2.0%
Hogs, lean (lb.)	.52	.52	unch.	-0.6%	-27.4%
Natural Gas (Btu.)	2.70	2.68	+0.02	+1.0%	-8.5%
Oil, heating (gal.)	1.96	1.98	-0.02	-1.0%	-5.7%
Oil, lt. swt. crude (bar.)	62.06	63.54	-1.48	-2.3%	+2.7%
Silver (troy oz.)	16.33	16.32	+0.01	+0.1%	-4.3%
Soybeans (bushel)	10.34	10.31	+0.03	+0.2%	+8.6%
Wheat (bushel)	4.72	4.65	+0.07	+1.6%	+10.6%

**FOREIGN CURRENCIES**

Currency per dollar	Close	Prev.	6 mo. ago	Yr. ago
British pound	.7100	.7142	.7654	.8016
Canadian dollar	1.2779	1.2756	1.2530	1.3413
Chinese yuan	6.3086	6.3054	6.6428	6.9002
Euro	.8140	.8172	.8521	.9393
Japanese yen	106.85	107.45	112.71	110.78
Mexican peso	18.3318	18.1719	18.5404	18.7623

**FOREIGN MARKETS**

Country	Close	Prev.	Change	%Chg.	YTD %
Frankfurt	12,241.27	12,305.19	-63.92	-0.5%	-5.2%
Hong Kong	29,844.94	29,518.69	+326.25	+1.1%	-0.3%
Japan (Nikkei)	21,567.52	21,645.42	-77.90	-0.4%	-5.3%
London	7,183.64	7,199.50	-15.86	-0.2%	-6.6%
Mexico City	47,926.11	47,951.75	-25.64	-0.1%	-2.9%

SOURCE: Morningstar, Dow Jones Indexes, The Associated Press

## LIFELINE



Jay Z. JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES

**THEY SAID WHAT?**  
**THE STARS' BEST QUOTES**

“Much like you, I have a beautiful wife who is understanding and knew that I'm not the worst of what I've done. We did the hard work of going to therapy, and really we love each other so, we really put in the work, and for years. This music that I'm making now is a result of things that happened already and, like you, I like to believe that we're in a better place today but still working and communicating and growing,” Jay-Z told David Letterman on his Netflix venture *My Next Guest Needs No Introduction*.



Lorde. NICHOLAS HUNT/GETTY IMAGES

**HOW WAS YOUR DAY?**  
**LORDE APOLOGIZES**

Lorde is in hot water. The 21-year-old New Zealand-born pop star drew ire on Thursday after posting a tone-deaf photo of a waiting bath, with the caption “And iiii will always love you” — a clear reference to Whitney Houston. Houston died in 2012 when she accidentally drowned (a result of heart disease and long-time cocaine abuse) in a bathtub in Los Angeles. An hour later, the post was down and Lorde issued her apology in an Instagram story.



Harry, Meghan Markle. KARWAI TANG

**ROYALS REPORT**  
**INVICTUS GAMES**

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle are revisiting their first big outing as a couple, attending the U.K. team trials of the Invictus Games in Bath, England Friday. The pair made a splash at the closing ceremony of last year's games in Toronto, kissing and holding hands as the world eagerly watched on. The duo went casual for Friday's events, with Prince Harry, patron of the Invictus Games Foundation, donning a black Invictus Games jacket and Markle in matching polo.

## USA SNAPSHOTS®



SOURCE Baby Einstein Survey of 1,000 U.S. parents with kids 5 and under  
 MIKE B. SMITH, JANET LOEHRKE/USA TODAY

## TELEVISION

# ‘Jersey Shore’ has grown up — and yet it hasn’t

Six years later, we give the guilty-pleasure gang another day in the sun

Patrick Ryan  
 USA TODAY

As inevitable as a hangover after a long night at Karma, *Jersey Shore* has risen from its proverbial tanning bed.

With the onslaught of revivals hitting the small screen this year, it was only a matter of time until MTV returned to its boisterous reality hit, which signed off in 2012 after six seasons of fights, hookups and boozy summertime shenanigans in Seaside Heights, N.J. It was the type of show for which the term “guilty pleasure” was invented: an excuse to watch a group of brazen twenty- and thirty-somethings misbehave in ways most of us would just as soon forget.

And yet, even as the party wound down in later seasons and the manufactured drama grew stiffer than Pauly D's hair, we kept on watching because of the outsize personalities, led by Nicole “Snooki” Polizzi and Mike “The Situation” Sorrentino. Whether they were dodging “grenades” at nightclubs or doing their “GTL” routines (gym, tan, laundry), they were insanely quotable.

Which is why we were delighted when we learned that the gang would reunite for *Jersey Shore Family Vacation*, premiering globally Thursday (8 ET/PT), in which they take their drunken tomfoolery to Miami's South Beach.

For Millennials such as myself, watching the original *Jersey Shore* was a carefree weekly ritual, synonymous with tossing back bottom-shelf liquor in your college dorm room with a group of friends and hoping your RA didn't hear you. But we've since grown up, and so has the cast: Snooki, Paul “Pauly D” DelVecchio and Jenni “JWoww” Farley are now parents, while a sober Situation faces prison time for tax evasion.

Would watching them now just look like a sad, desperate attempt to resuscitate MTV's once-popular brand and their own mostly non-existent careers? Thankfully, no.

Most of the highly entertaining season premiere is dedicated to catching up with the returning cast. Ronnie Ortiz-Magro, for instance, is expecting a baby with his girlfriend, and Vinny Guadagnino still has regular dinners with his mom. The only original roommate not coming back is Ronnie's ex, Sammi “Sweetheart” Giancola, which becomes a source of tension with her close friend, Deena Cortese, when Ronnie continues to bad-mouth her. Further stirring the



Ready or not, South Beach, here they come: Pauly D, JWoww, Ronnie, Deena, Vinny, The Situation and Snooki are back at it again. MTV

“Family Vacation” wisely doesn't mess with its comfortably familiar formula, and it goes down like a cheap tequila shot. We know it's bad for us, but it's always a blast in a glass.

pot is a talking Sammi sex doll: The guys bring it to Miami to prank Ronnie, and Snooki later wrestles it to the ground.

Otherwise, it feels as if no time has passed. The girls make a nostalgic pit stop in Seaside Heights, visiting the boardwalk T-shirt shop where they once worked and retrieve the duck phone from their old house. And although they admit no one fist-pumps and “Jersey Turnpikes” on the dance floor like they did, Snooki still drunkenly tumbles to the ground at the end of the episode.

## TELEVISION

# Before she was royal, she was Rachel



Kelly Lawler  
 Columnist  
 USA TODAY

Wedding bells were ringing for Rachel Zane in the midseason premiere of *Suits* Wednesday (USA, 9 ET/PT), but I couldn't stop thinking about the royal ones ringing for Meghan Markle.

The American actress has been playing Rachel on the legal drama for seven seasons now, but the latest crop of episodes is the first to air since she and Britain's Prince Harry announced in November that they are engaged, and the last to feature Markle and Patrick J. Adams. The royal wedding is set for May 19.

Maybe it's because her character was engaged on the show, or because Markle has been stepping out quite a bit with her princely fiancé or that the drama on *Suits* has grown tired, but I couldn't stop thinking about the royal wedding every time she was on screen. I know this is problematic. Markle



Meghan Markle has had to plan for two weddings. On “Suits,” her character is marrying Mike Ross (Patrick J. Adams.)  
 USA NETWORK

is a fine actress, and her worth is not limited to her engagement to a famous man. Still, it's not every day someone marries an honest-to-goodness prince, especially an American woman of color from one of my basic-cable guilty pleasures.

So when Rachel discussed her vows with Mike Ross (Adams) and said, “The wedding: It's going to be here before we

know it,” who can blame me for wondering about who will design her real-life dress? What celebrities will attend? Will the *Suits* cast pull up to the palace?

Rachel didn't have a huge role in the opener, which focuses on the fallout from Jessica's (Gina Torres) disbarment and the romantic tension between Donna (Sarah Rafferty) and Harvey (Gabriel Macht). But she sweeps in to save Mike from making a bad deal for his client, and affirms her commitment to their upcoming nuptials. Because she and Adams are ready to depart, the premiere seems to set up a path for them to leave the firm together to focus on each other, mirroring her real life.

Although it's weird to see its main couple leave, *Suits* will go on. The Donna and Harvey drama is already more central than Rachel and Mike's. And USA has already made the high-profile move of casting Katherine Heigl for Season 8.

Soon, I'll be able to obsess about Markle's royal ventures all on their own, but I'll never forget where I knew her first.

## LIFE

## THEATER

# 'Mean Girls' musical says 'Me Too'

Movement shaped show's message on Broadway

Maeve McDermott  
USA TODAY

NEW YORK — From its inception, *Mean Girls* has always been feminist.

Tina Fey's beloved teen comedy, an adaptation of Rosalind Wiseman's *Queen Bees and Wannabes*, became a cult classic when it was released in 2004 and hilariously yet subtly moralized the dangers of women not supporting one another.

The musical adaptation of *Mean Girls* opens at Broadway's August Wilson Theatre on Sunday, and while the characters — and fan-favorites jokes about Glenn Coco and Kälteen bars — carry over from the movie, the feminist themes are more clearly articulated.

"I think that's a way that they've taken the movie from 2004 to now," Erika Henningsen, who plays the musical's central role of Cady Heron, told USA TODAY.

There's the overtly girl-power dialogue and songs from teacher Ms. Norbury and subversive best friend Janis Sarkisian (a name change from the movie's Janis Ian).

There's also a surprising moment from airheaded Karen Smith about teaching boys not to disseminate racy photos their female peers send to them, and a climactic speech from Regina George, the queen bee of the Plastics clique, about how women don't need to apologize for being powerful.

"There's a (new) wonderful scene in the musical where Regina tells Cady, 'You don't have to apologize for being a badass. You have to apologize when you tear somebody else down because of it. But you should never apologize for your worth and your strength,'" Henningsen said. "And that's sort of been the new development of Tina's message, of the show's message for today."

Fey shepherded her original *Mean Girls* script to the stage, writing the musical's book, with her husband, Jeff Richmond (*30 Rock*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*), writing the music and Tony winner Casey Nicholaw (*Book of Mormon*, *Spamalot*) directing and choreographing.

She also tapped lyricist Nell Benjamin (*Legally Blonde*) and old boss Lorne Michaels (*Saturday Night Live*) for production.

One thing that none of the musical's braintrust could've anticipated was that *Mean Girls* would enter previews at the same time sexual assault allegations against Harvey Weinstein would begin to emerge and transform the social climate.



Cady Heron (Erika Henningsen, left), Gretchen Wieners (Ashley Park), Regina George (Taylor Louderman) and Karen Smith (Kate Rockwell) redefine female empowerment in "Mean Girls."

MEAN GIRLS

**"The less that we tear one another down and the less we undermine one another, the more that we can move forward and accomplish."**

Erika Henningsen

Now, in the context of the Me Too movement, which has swept the nation in the short months since the *Mean Girls* Washington, D.C., pre-Broadway run in October, the musical has an added meaning that furthers the original movie's message of sisterhood.

"I feel like, in just the last couple of months, this story has snowballed and gained steam and it's been exciting to be a part of a project that adds a positive message to that fire," Henningsen said.

"At the very end of this show, there's a moment where all six of the leading ladies are at the edge of the stage. And that

doesn't happen in a musical very often, where you identify with six different females and you know them, they're not just ancillary characters. And the whole idea of that (scene) was that especially now, women are stronger together."

The 25-year-old actress, who made her Broadway debut as the youngest Fantine in *Les Misérables* history, points to the movie's themes of women supporting women as a central aspect of both the new *Mean Girls* musical and Hollywood's changing climate.

"The less that we tear one another down and the less we undermine one

another, the more that we can move forward and accomplish," she says. "There's this idea that, when we rob a woman of her individuality or her identity, it only makes it OK for men, or for people in positions of power, to do the same."

And, save for a topical joke or two about Russian hackers and #complicit crooks, the musical stays subtle with its political messaging, keeping its focus on the evolution of its female characters. "The nice thing is that (*Mean Girls*) drives that message home in such a subtle way and in a positive way. There's no bashing of other people. There's just that clear message that Cady (recognizes), that, 'I have the choice to be kind to somebody."

"If I have the option to treat somebody with dignity and respect, it's just easier and so much more effective for our female population as a whole to choose that route."

## STREAMING

## 'First Match' offers a case study in inclusion

Carly Mallenbaum  
USA TODAY

What does a movie look like when filmmakers use the "inclusion rider" that has become a Hollywood buzzword of late?

Exhibit A: *First Match*, the film festival hit now streaming on Netflix.

"Apparently we did have an inclusion rider, but we didn't know that was the term," first-time writer/director Olivia Newman says. Her coming-of-age drama is about a teenage girl, Monique (played by Elvire Emanuelle), who joins the all-boys' wrestling team as a way to connect with her father.

Inclusion riders, which entered public discourse after Frances McDormand's pointed Oscar speech this year, refer to contractual requirements that a production's cast and crew be diverse and representative. In recent weeks, Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Michael B. Jordan and Paul Feig have announced they're formally adopting inclusion riders in projects going forward.

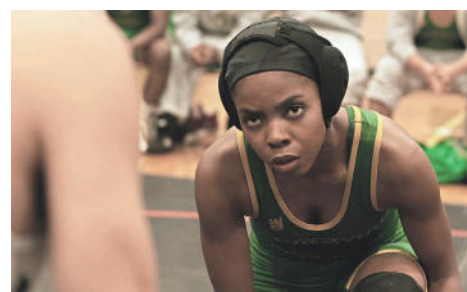
But Newman, a self-described "big-time feminist," was ahead of the curve. The filmmaker has a degree in feminist studies from Vassar, volunteered at the Créteil International Women's Film Festival in Paris, worked for film distributor Women Make Movies and earned her master's degree in screenwriting and directing at Columbia.

"I know how important it is to offer opportunities to women," she says.

So for *First Match*, Newman and her



'First Match' star Elvire Emanuelle joins writer/director Olivia Newman at a South by Southwest festival party last month. DANIEL BOCZARSKI/GETTY IMAGES



Monique (Elvire Emanuelle) prepares to wrestle as part of her high school's team in "First Match." NETFLIX

producers required that there be an equal number of men and women on any list of potential hires. "It's not as easy as it sounds, because there's less women working in all roles in film, so you have to dig a little deeper," she says.

She wound up with a crew made up of 60% women, who filled roles including production designer, editor, costume designer and cinematographer.

"It was crucial to me that I hire a female (cinematographer), because this is a really intimate story about a young woman, with so many complex emotions," Newman says. This year, *Mudbound*'s Rachel Morrison became the first Oscar-nominated female cinematographer.

"In the end, I ended up with the best crew possible, regardless of gender," Newman says. "I just want to shine a light on women's stories, and I want to portray women in all of their complexities and nuance."



MOVIES

# In theaters this weekend

Compiled from reviews by USA TODAY film critics

**Annihilation** ★★★☆ 2 hours

**Plot:** A biologist (Natalie Portman) joins an expedition into an otherworldly area to find what's ailing her husband.  
**Director:** Alex Garland



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

**Rating:** R  
**Upside:** The film is a beautiful and brutal head trip with deep thoughts and horrific imagery.  
**Downside:** The crazier the situations, the more muddled the plot grows.

**Black Panther** ★★★☆ 2 hours, 15 minutes

**Plot:** The royal Wakandan superhero (Chadwick Boseman) has his reign challenged by internal and external threats.  
**Director:** Ryan Coogler



MARVEL STUDIOS

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** The movie explores deep themes while unleashing a rousing adventure with geopolitical intrigue.  
**Downside:** Wakanda is such a wondrous place, you'll need a rewatch to see everything.

**Blockers** ★★★☆ 1 hour, 42 minutes

**Plot:** Three parents scramble to keep their daughters from going through with a prom-night pact to lose their virginity.  
**Director:** Kay Cannon



QUANTRELL D. COLBERT/AP

**Rating:** R  
**Upside:** The modern take on the teen sex comedy offers a ribald romp and a thoughtful plot about inclusivity and female empowerment.  
**Downside:** As fun as the grown-ups are, "Blockers" doesn't focus on its charismatic youngsters nearly enough.

**The Greatest Showman** ★★☆☆ 1 hour, 45 minutes

**Plot:** P.T. Barnum (Hugh Jackman) risks everything to put together a museum of oddities and also creates a family of outcasts.  
**Director:** Michael Gracey



20TH CENTURY FOX

**Rating:** PG  
**Upside:** The soundtrack is filled with amazing, catchy showtunes from "La La Land" songwriters Pasek and Paul.  
**Downside:** Jackman's Barnum is the least interesting aspect of his own biopic.

**Isle of Dogs** ★★★☆ 1 hour, 41 minutes

**Plot:** A 12-year-old Japanese boy ventures to an island of exiled dogs to find his favorite pooch.  
**Director:** Wes Anderson



FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** Anderson's quirky signature style is more heart-warming than usual here.  
**Downside:** The story meanders in the middle but, like a good dog, finds its way home.

**Love, Simon** ★★★☆ 1 hour, 49 minutes

**Plot:** A closeted teenager (Nick Robinson) begins a cyber relationship with a gay classmate while keeping his sexuality a secret from friends and family.  
**Director:** Greg Berlanti



AP

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** A delightful and charming gay romance that makes coming out a normal part of the teen-movie experience.  
**Downside:** John Hughes fans will see very familiar tropes, though they're played in new ways.

**Pacific Rim Uprising** ★★☆☆ 1 hour, 50 minutes

**Plot:** The world scrambles again to mount an offensive against giant monsters with equally big robots.  
**Director:** Steven S. DeKnight



LEGENDARY PICTURES/AP

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** Ultra-charismatic John Boyega is a joy to watch, even surrounded by ridiculous sci-fi.  
**Downside:** Hammy dialogue and a nonsensical plot spend the robots-punching-monsters fun.

**A Quiet Place** ★★★☆ 1 hour, 35 minutes

**Plot:** A family lives an extremely quiet life to keep from being hunted by dangerous creatures.  
**Director:** John Krasinski

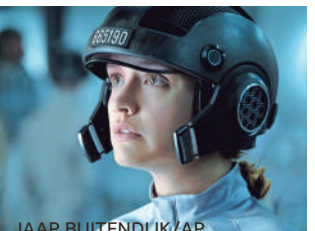


JONNY COURNOYER/AP

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** Like "Alien" on a farm, the thriller creates a feeling of panic that permeates throughout.  
**Downside:** It's best not to think too hard about the inconsistencies of the rules involving the super-sensitive monsters.

**Ready Player One** ★★★☆ 2 hours, 20 minutes

**Plot:** An Ohio teen (Tye Sheridan) searches for a treasured Easter egg in his virtual-reality escape.  
**Director:** Steven Spielberg



JAAP BUITENDIJK/AP

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** Spielberg brings soul to a dizzying array of pop-culture references and stunning video-game visuals.  
**Downside:** There's just too much going on much of the time. It'll leave you feeling like you're buried by Chuck E. Cheese tokens.

**Red Sparrow** ★★☆☆ 2 hours, 20 minutes

**Plot:** After her career is ended by a horrific injury, a talented Russian ballerina (Jennifer Lawrence) is recruited to be a government spy.  
**Director:** Francis Lawrence



TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

**Rating:** R  
**Upside:** Lawrence presents a successfully different take on a secret agent, one who uses sex as a weapon.  
**Downside:** While it features some good episodes, the story is uneven and never satisfyingly jells.

**Tomb Raider** ★★☆☆ 2 hours, 2 minutes

**Plot:** An aimless young woman (Alicia Vikander) becomes an adventurer when seeking a mysterious tomb and her missing father.  
**Director:** Roar Uthaug

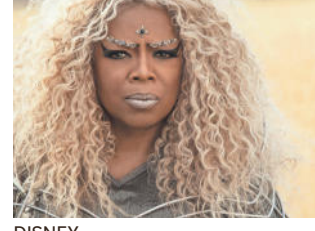


WARNER BROS. PICTURES

**Rating:** PG-13  
**Upside:** A jacked-up Vikander looks the role, plus the movie has fun moments and big action.  
**Downside:** The video-game adaptation leans dull, predictable and way too earnest.

**A Wrinkle in Time** ★★☆☆ 2 hours

**Plot:** Searching for her missing father, a teen girl (Storm Reid) goes on an interdimensional adventure and encounters an ancient evil.  
**Director:** Ava DuVernay



DISNEY

**Rating:** PG  
**Upside:** The fantasy visuals are splashy, and Reid leads a surprising amount of gravitas to her breakthrough role.  
**Downside:** The screenplay is a woeful adaptation of a children's sci-fi classic.

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## PUZZLE ANSWERS

4/7

**CROSSWORD**

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**UP & DOWN WORDS**

SQUEAKY / CLEAN  
CLEAN / BREAK  
BREAK / OPEN  
OPEN / DOOR  
DOOR / PRIZE  
PRIZE / MONEY  
MONEY / MAGAZINE

**WORD ROUNDUP**

REALITY SPORTS DRAMA NEWS / INDIGO VIOLET MAROON PURPLE / PERIOD HYPHEN COMMA / CERES PLUTO ERIS / MALI LAOS PERU

**SUDOKU**

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3	9	4	1	5	2	6	7	8
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**QUICKCROSS**

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**DON'T QUOTE ME**

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# Spieth takes some punches, stays in Masters contention

Steve DiMeglio  
USA TODAY

AUGUSTA, Ga. – Jordan Spieth took it on the chin the first two holes in Friday's second round of the Masters.

But the overnight leader, who shot an opening-round 6-under-par 66, got back up from the well-manicured Augusta National Golf Club's emerald grounds and kept himself right in the 82nd battle for the green jacket.

"I've taken a lot of punches on this golf course, and in tournaments in general," Spieth said. "I told Michael (Greller, his caddie), 'Look, when this course plays tough, I'm good for a double here or some bogeys there. Let's make these the only ones.' He was really good at saying, 'Man, you always take punches out here and come back stronger.'"

Spieth did just that once again and after making a double-bogey 6 on the first hole and a bogey 6 on the second hole – tangling with the Georgia pines on both occasions – Spieth was 1 under the last 16 holes and signed for a 74.

That kept him on the first page of the leaderboard through 36 holes at 4 under.

The 2015 Masters champion kept his wits about him even though, for the first time in 18 rounds in this tournament, he didn't make a birdie on the front nine and shot 40. He kept his wits about him even though his first birdie didn't come until the 13th hole, his second not until the 15th.

And he kept his wits about him even though he lost a two-stroke lead and was suddenly two strokes back after playing for 45 minutes on Friday.

"I'm not going to downgrade my skill level, but I'm also not going to downgrade my ability to take punches and fight back on this course," Spieth said about keeping his round intact. "Good starts are really nice out here. Bad starts are tough to come back from. If I look at it one way, I mean, in 2016, I went bogey, bogey, quad and then was able to rebound from that. I could have been 3- or 4-under the rest of the way after something like that."

Spieth, who also finished runner-up



Jordan Spieth reacts after hitting his tee shot on the second hole during the second round of the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club. MICHAEL MADRID/USA TODAY SPORTS

in 2014 and 2016, was referring to his infamous collapse in 2016, when his five-shot lead with nine holes to play evaporated with a bogey on the 10th, a bogey on the 11th, two balls into Rae's Creek and a quadruple-bogey 7 on the 12th. He eventually lost and had to slip the green jacket onto the shoulders of Danny Willett.

"So what's the first couple holes on a

Friday start mean? It doesn't really mean much to me," Spieth said. "It means let's figure out what was wrong and fix it, but it's not going to affect the outcome of this tournament off of those two holes. I'm still in a great position."

"I just had two really bad tee shots to start the day. The conditions made it challenging, as well. I felt like I hit some

really good shots on a lot of holes and just got kind of gusted by an opposite wind, or were one or two yards away from being phenomenal. I didn't have very many really good birdie looks. With the way the back nine was played today, the wheels could have come off. But I made some nice par saves and made two birdies and I'm still in this golf tournament."

# Johnson looks for Texas mojo to end skid

Anthony Andro  
Special to USA TODAY

FORT WORTH – Texas Motor Speedway President Eddie Gossage will be well-prepared for a possible Jimmie Johnson victory in Sunday's O'Reilly Auto Parts 500.

Gossage will have a Johnson bobblehead in victory lane in case the driver of the No. 48 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet finds his way to his eighth Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series race win at the track.

The track handed out Kevin Harvick bobbleheads for the fall race and Harvick won. Maybe that will be the case Sunday for Johnson, too. Right now, the seven-time series champ will take any kind of good mojo he can get as he's off to one of the worst starts in his career.

"It could be a huge weekend for us," said Johnson, who is the defending race champion. "The results haven't been what we want. I think bigger strides

aren't far away for us. We've been working hard over the off weekend."

Johnson is in the midst of a 29-race winless drought dating to last year at Dover. Johnson sits 17th in points with one top-10 finish in the new Chevrolet Camaro. The 83-time winner in the series hasn't even led a lap in 2018.

While his start has been a cause for concern for his fans, Johnson is confident he and his team are doing everything they can to right the ship.

"It's a team that's used to winning on a regular basis and it impacts a lot of things," he said. "Confidence is part of that, and on different levels everybody is doing a lot of self-reflection. Eventually over time you start to scratch things (reasons for slow start) off the list. My confidence has come back pretty strong. We've had a couple of good runs, and the performance at California (ninth-place finish) helped."

"More than anything it's hard to see how much work has gone into the program, me, the team, engineers, all the departments and not closing the gap as much as we want. It's a hard thing to live (with)."

Johnson doesn't think the change from the Chevy SS to the Camaro has been the only reason his team has struggled. Kyle Larson is also in the Camaro, and while he hasn't won he's been a top-10 car. Setup issues have hurt Johnson, and so has the struggle to find grip.

As bad as things seem, Johnson was in a similar spot this time last year. He hadn't won a race until coming to Texas and then reeled off all three of his 2017 wins in a seven-race stretch.

Can that happen again? "I didn't realize we were in same spot," he said. "Toward the end of 2016 we had good speed in our car. We started 2016 a little slow. We're at that slow period now and trying to rebuild."



Jimmie Johnson has been contemplating his lack of success this year including this moment during practice at Las Vegas in March for the Pennzoil 400. JEROME MIRON/USA TODAY SPORTS

Johnson and his team aren't the only ones who want to see the No. 48 winning again. With the recent retirements of the likes of Jeff Gordon, Tony Stewart and Dale Earnhardt Jr., NASCAR needs its biggest stars to excel.

"He's the face of the sport — a seven-time champ — in particular in light of the retirements that have occurred," Gossage said. "You need an established star, and he's clearly at the top of the heap and you need them to do well. It's important. This is his longest winless streak, and he isn't running badly."

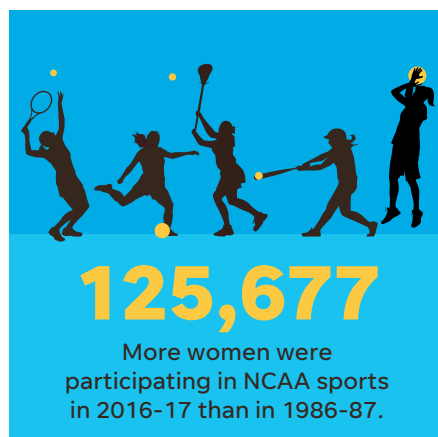
Of course, he's coming to Texas where he truly is bobblehead-worthy. In addition to the seven Texas Motor Speedway Cup wins, Johnson has 15

top-five finishes and 21 top-10s in his 29 starts. But as good as he was in winning last April's race, he finished 27th in the fall. What to expect at the track is also an unknown as it's the second year of a repave.

"The track is probably a bigger variable than the car," Johnson said. "It (the car) feels very similar. We're all wondering how much the track has changed since last fall. New surfaces are edgy and inconsistent with grip. Hopefully we can use the middle of the track and one day use the high line. I know my history at these tracks. It doesn't guarantee you anything."

Maybe the bobblehead in victory lane does. Johnson will find out Sunday.

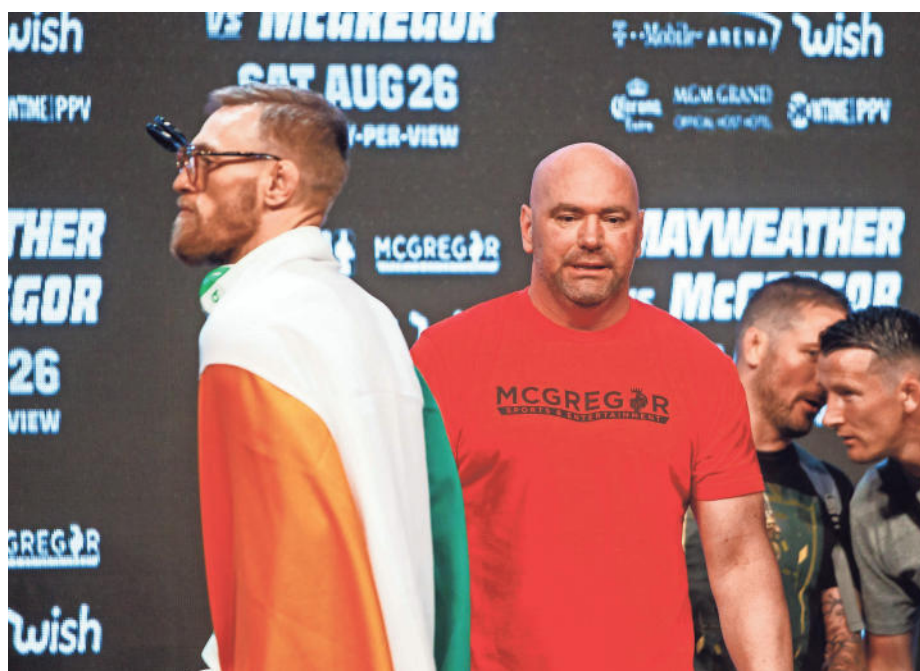
## USA SNAPSHOTS®



NOTE 215,317 women competed in NCAA athletics last season compared to 89,640 30 years ago. SOURCE NCAA Research ELLEN J. HOLLOWAY, JANET LOHRKE/USA TODAY

## MMA

USA TODAY SPORTS



UFC President Dana White, right, in a photo from last year, called Conor McGregor's actions 'disgusting' on Thursday. MARK J. REBILAS/USA TODAY SPORTS

## UFC's White has been enabler to McGregor's antics



**Josh Peter**  
Columnist  
USA TODAY

Maybe Dana White should have turned himself in to the New York Police Department on Thursday night at the same time Conor McGregor did. White, the UFC's president, is all but an accomplice to what he called "the most disgusting thing that has ever happened in the history of the company."

The disgust involving McGregor, White and the UFC started a long time ago.

That is not meant to minimize what happened Thursday — McGregor, along with others, attacked a bus filled with UFC 223 fighters at Barclays Center in Brooklyn. One fighter suffered facial injuries, and another fighter suffered an eye injury, according to White. McGregor is in police custody after being charged with three counts of assault and one count of criminal mischief.

Video showed McGregor behaving as if he were above the law, and for years, the Ultimate Fighting Championship organization has reinforced the idea that he is.

In August 2016, McGregor threw bottles and an unopened can of an en-

ergy drink during a news conference before his rematch with Nate Diaz. "I see it as handbags," McGregor said later, and apparently so did the UFC.

The fighter who relishes his nickname "The Notorious" faced consequences for his actions only after the Nevada Athletic Commission fined him \$150,000.

During a promotional tour for McGregor's fight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. in August, McGregor told Mayweather to "dance for me, boy." He described himself as "half-black from the belly button down" and appeared to refer to black people as "dancing monkeys."

Again, not even a reprimand from the UFC.

In October, a UFC referee stopped a fight in Poland when McGregor was circling the octagon and shouting instructions to his teammate, Artem Lobov. Publicly stating what White could have long before, the referee told McGregor to "act professional" and ordered him back to his seat.

But in November, McGregor was up to no good again, slapping a ring judge at Bellator 187, a non-UFC mixed martial arts event in Dublin, and again, there was no public scolding or punishment.

So when things erupted Thursday, White had every right to be disgusted — with McGregor and himself.

## Meet fighter who seeks serenity over 'fake hate'

**Martin Rogers**  
USA TODAY

Everyone in the Ultimate Fighting Championship hates something or someone, it seems. Most of the organization's athletes know only one way to promote a fight — by belittling, insulting or trash talking an opponent.

Rose Namajunas is both the exception to that rule and an exceptional fighter, having claimed the UFC's women's strawweight title in November. She defends it on Saturday in UFC 223 in Brooklyn in New York City in a rematch against former champion Joanna Jędrzejczyk and revealed how there is just one thing about the world of mixed martial arts that she hates.

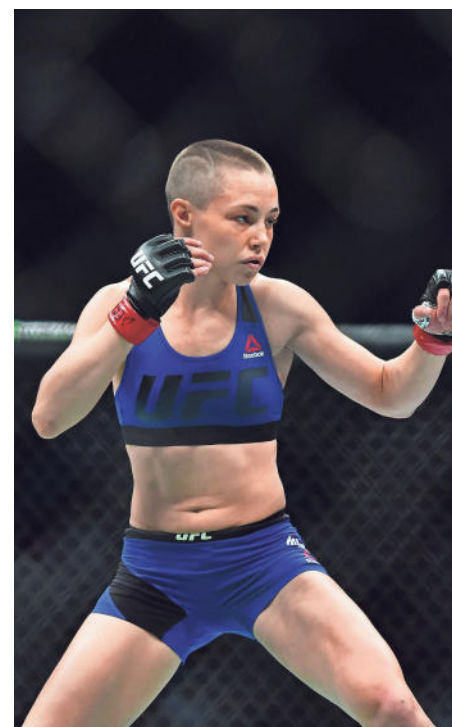
"I can't stand all this fake hate," Namajunas told USA TODAY. "Ego and fear and different negative forces push people into talking a certain way about each other. If there is genuine disdain, sure, why not? But why generate hate for the sake of it? My job is to fight, but personally I don't have hate outside the job."

Namajunas goes about things in an entirely different way, one that is a reflection of the serenity she has in her everyday life. In the buildup to the pair's first fight at Madison Square Garden, Jędrzejczyk attempted to bully Namajunas, taunting her about the mental illness issues that she and her late father suffered from.

Instead of responding with venom, she instead steeled her focus, an approach that paid off with a resounding first-round stoppage that handed Jędrzejczyk the first defeat of her UFC career.

A combination of the result, as well as the positive public response she received, convinced Namajunas of the power of wellness and serenity. She had a troubled childhood in a rough part of Milwaukee and has spoken briefly of being sexually abused during that time but now lives a quiet life with fiancé Pat Barry outside Denver.

She plays the piano and has learned to play *Cruisin'* by Smokey Robinson. She grows vegetables in her garden and cooks them in her kitchen, practices yoga, wears clothing filled with messages of peace and love and looks after her two cats and Mishka, her emotional support dog. She's currently reading a book called



Rose Namajunas will defend her UFC women's strawweight title Saturday in UFC 223 in Brooklyn in a rematch against former champion Joanna Jędrzejczyk.

RON CHENOY/USA TODAY SPORTS

### Buddha's Brain.

Not exactly what you'd expect from someone with the willingness and capacity to inflict pain and harm on those who face her.

"It seems like a contradicting mind-set in such a brutal sport, but I think it actually fits in a way," Namajunas added. "To me, fighting for love and goodness and the positive things in life is more powerful than fighting with hate in your heart. Love is the mind-set where I want to be at all times."

Namajunas' battle with Jędrzejczyk isn't the last fight on the UFC 223 pay-per-view card from Barclays Center on Saturday, but it might be the most competitive bout on the schedule.

With so much calm in her life it is a wonder that the 25-year-old can raise enough ferocity to compete, but she insists that is the least of her worries.

"I never have a lack of aggression," she added. "I actually need to put myself on a leash to make sure that aggression is controlled. I only lose when I am out of control. I need to be more like a cat and less like a Tasmanian devil."

## NHL

## Six negatives before NHL playoffs start

**Kevin Allen**  
USA TODAY

The Pittsburgh Penguins head into the postseason next week on a quest to become the first team in 35 years to win three consecutive Stanley Cup championships. Sin City is all in on the Vegas Golden Knights' first playoff appearance.

The Nashville Predators have an All-Star cast of anthem singers lined up. The Los Angeles Kings are back in contention, and fans in Winnipeg might have the most reasons to be excited since the days when Ulf Nilsson, Anders Hedberg and Bobby Hull wore a Jets jersey.

Fans have plenty of reasons to be optimistic about this season's playoffs. But there are negatives about the upcoming postseason.

**No Connor McDavid:** This would be like the NBA launching the postseason without LeBron James or the NFL starting the playoffs without Tom Brady. While the NHL has plenty of dynamic performers, none are quite as fast and magical as the Edmonton Oilers' McDavid. Playing in a low-scoring era, McDavid has registered 254 points in his first 208 NHL regular-season games.

**Flawed format:** The NHL's divisional format means it's probable that the top two seeds in each conference can meet in the second round instead of in the



Center Connor McDavid has 106 points in 81 games this season, but his Oilers didn't make the playoffs. SERGEI BELSKI/USA TODAY SPORTS

conference final. In the Western Conference, top-seeded Nashville and Winnipeg, No. 4 overall in the league, will meet in the second round if they win their

opening-round series. Likewise, Tampa Bay, No. 2 overall, can play No. 3 Boston in the second round in the Eastern Conference. It's time for the NHL to switch

from a divisional format to a conference No. 1 through No. 8 format.

**Original Two?** It's not good for the NHL to have four of the Original Six teams (Detroit, Chicago, Montreal and the New York Rangers) as non-playoff qualifiers. Those are major markets sitting on the sidelines. In a 31-team league, you expect a couple of those teams to be absent every season. But not four.

**Critical injuries:** Ryan Suter, the Minnesota Wild's No. 1 defenseman, has been lost to a broken leg. The Wild are not the same team without his all-around play. Colorado Avalanche workhorse defenseman Erik Johnson is also injured, as is Anaheim Ducks puck-moving defenseman Cam Fowler and goalie John Gibson, who is day-to-day with an upper body injury.

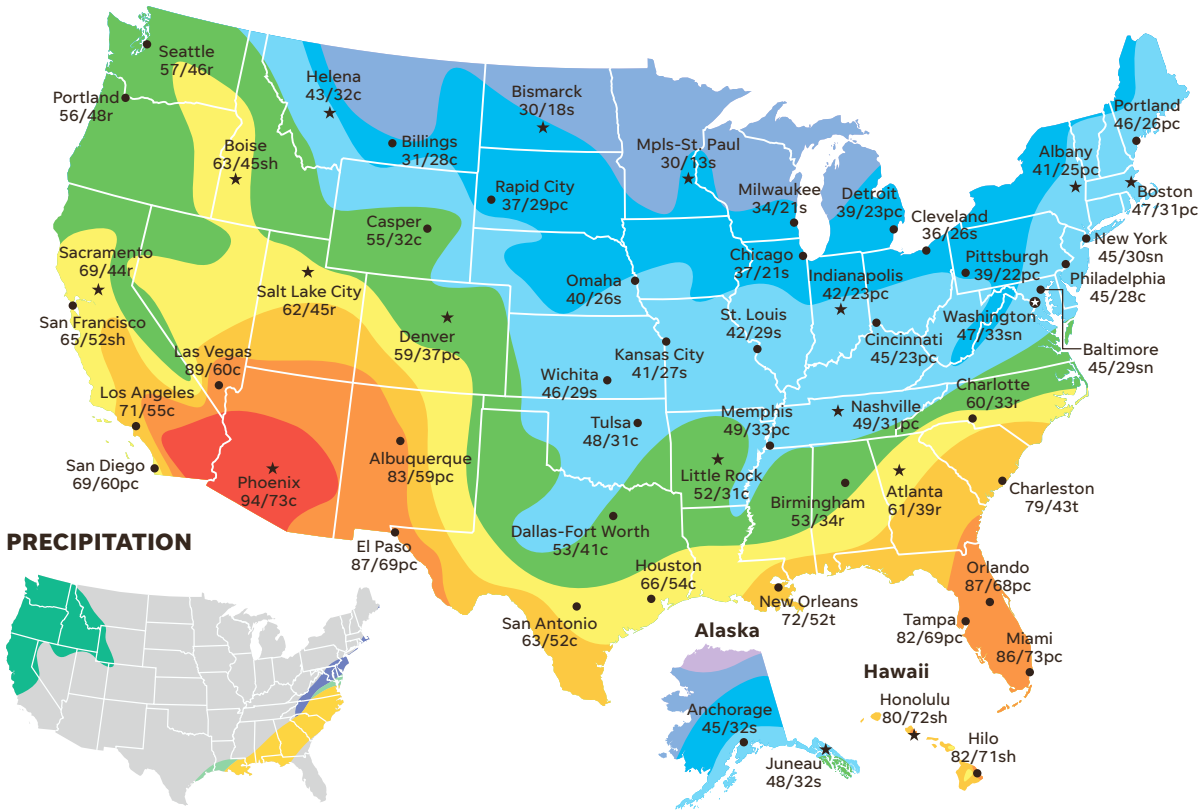
**No goodbye series:** Vancouver Canucks stars Daniel and Henrik Sedin, retiring at the end of this season, won't have the opportunity to play a final playoff series. It's a shame, because these are two of the classiest players in NHL history. Their final game is Saturday against the Oilers.

**Controversy will come:** The league chose to not make any changes to the offside rule, but it did make a tweak to goalie interference judgment so that the situation room has the final say. But you know there will be a game or two decided by one (or both) of these calls.

# WEATHER

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USATODAY.COM

## TODAY'S FORECAST



AccuWeather DOWNLOAD THE APP

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather Inc. ©2018

**Temperatures (°F)** Below 10 10s 20s 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s 90s 100s 110+

**Precipitation** Thunderstorms Rain Showers Snow Snow flurries Ice / wintry mix

c Cloudy f Fog i Ice r Rain sf Snow flurries sn Snow w Windy  
dr Drizzle h Haze pc Partly cloudy s Sunny sh Showers t Thunderstorms

Note: The forecast highs are for the 24-hour period of that day. Low-temperature forecasts are for the upcoming night.

## NATIONAL FORECAST

	TODAY	SUN
Albany, N.Y.	41/25pc	41/26pc
Allentown, Pa.	46/26sn	46/29pc
Atlantic City	42/30i	47/32pc
Augusta, Ga.	70/40r	64/43s
Austin	58/48c	76/61pc
Bakersfield, Calif.	74/50r	74/50s
Baton Rouge	65/45r	65/60pc
Boise	63/45sh	57/35pc
Buffalo	33/23c	34/25sf
Cedar Rapids	37/18s	37/28sn
Colorado Springs	53/39c	58/31pc
Columbia, S.C.	70/39r	62/45s
Columbus, Ohio	43/24pc	43/31s
Dayton, Ohio	40/21pc	42/30s
Daytona Beach	85/63pc	72/64c
Des Moines	40/25s	36/29sn
Duluth, Minn.	29/11pc	30/20c
Fort Myers, Fla.	87/70pc	86/69pc
Fresno	72/49r	73/50s
Grand Rapids	33/21pc	41/27pc
Greensboro, N.C.	54/30r	55/41s
Greenville, S.C.	61/35r	60/44s
Harrisburg, Pa.	46/30pc	46/33pc
Hartford, Conn.	47/25pc	46/27pc
Huntsville, Ala.	49/31c	63/47s
Jackson, Miss.	51/37c	66/53pc
Jacksonville	81/54c	65/55pc
Knoxville, Tenn.	46/29r	55/42pc
Lexington, Ky.	45/24sn	48/36pc
Louisville	49/28pc	51/38pc
Lubbock, Texas	54/38pc	82/42pc
Madison, Wis.	34/15s	38/26pc
McAllen, Texas	82/56c	83/70pc
Mobile, Ala.	71/44t	66/57pc
Myrtle Beach, S.C.	75/40r	59/47s
Nags Head, N.C.	58/39r	48/39pc
Norfolk, Va.	55/36r	51/41pc
Oklahoma City	47/31c	56/39pc
Palm Springs	94/65pc	95/68s
Pensacola, Fla.	74/47t	66/60s

	TODAY	SUN
Providence	48/30pc	48/30pc
Raleigh, N.C.	57/30r	56/40s
Reno	62/35r	66/41pc
Richmond, Va.	44/29sn	54/36s
Rochester, N.Y.	37/25c	36/25sf
San Jose, Calif.	68/49sh	68/48s
Sarasota, Fla.	82/68pc	80/66c
Savannah, Ga.	79/45t	64/51pc
Shreveport, La.	53/37c	67/53pc
South Bend, Ind.	33/18s	40/28pc
Spokane, Wash.	51/41r	53/36c
Springfield, Mo.	44/27pc	47/32c
Syracuse, N.Y.	35/24c	35/23sf
Toledo, Ohio	38/20s	41/28s
Tucson	91/64c	90/57s

## WORLD FORECAST

Athens, Greece	68/54t	70/55t
Baghdad	86/62s	89/65s
Beijing	54/35s	66/41c
Berlin	64/46s	67/46s
Buenos Aires	74/59pc	75/63t
Cairo	84/61s	79/61s
Caracas, Ven.	84/72pc	85/73pc
Freeport, Bahamas	83/72pc	83/70pc
Hong Kong	74/63c	77/68pc
Jerusalem	77/54s	68/49s
Kingston, Jamaica	86/76pc	87/75pc
London	58/49sh	58/48sh
Madrid	57/44r	60/42pc
Manila	91/76pc	90/78pc
Mexico City	79/54pc	79/55pc
Montreal	37/23pc	36/20c
Moscow	42/29pc	51/39pc
Nassau, Bahamas	85/73pc	86/71pc
New Delhi	95/75pc	98/75t
Paris	65/52t	65/51sh
Rome	66/50s	70/53pc
Sydney	82/67s	83/67s
Tokyo	69/48pc	61/49pc
Toronto	37/21pc	36/23pc



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## PUZZLES

Report puzzle problems to us at [feedback@usatoday.com](mailto:feedback@usatoday.com) or 1-800-872-7073

### CROSSWORD

EDITED Fred Piscop  
BY Fred Piscop

### AMMO DUMP

- ACROSS**
- 1 Blind trio of rhyme
  - 5 Drysdale or Koufax
  - 11 Photo \_\_\_\_ (media events)
  - 14 "All gone!" sound
  - 15 Beethoven's homage to Napoleon
  - 16 Long of "NCIS: Los Angeles"
  - 17 Airborne circus performer
  - 20 Parolees, e.g.
  - 21 Drum accompanying a sitar
  - 22 Out of sync
  - 24 Charity's URL ender
  - 25 Henpecked one's assent
  - 27 Tranquilizer gun missile
  - 29 Cheese in a wax coat
  - 31 Sit in judgment of
  - 32 Went "ZZZ," in comics
  - 35 Koteas of "Chicago P.D."
  - 38 Drug targeting cancer, e.g.
  - 41 Claude who painted landscapes
  - 42 Archaic "Yikes!"
  - 45 Humor magazine since 1952
  - 48 Klensch of fashion
  - 50 Per unit, slangily
  - 51 Online gaming self-images
  - 54 Flat-faced dog
  - 57 Place for a porker
  - 58 Silklike synthetic
  - 59 Downfall, as of an empire
  - 61 Marilyn Monroe, notably
  - 66 Texter's "That's hilarious!"
  - 67 Pink end of a No. 2
- DOWN**
- 1 Speedometer stat
  - 2 Note in a poker pot
  - 3 Are natives of
  - 4 Document sent online
  - 5 Interior designer's concern
  - 6 Common Jell-O flavor
  - 7 Mafia bosses
  - 8 Singapore Sling need
  - 9 Prefix with sphere or system
  - 10 Delivers a diatribe
  - 11 How a stunt may be pulled
  - 12 Parthenon feature
  - 13 Job interview topic
  - 18 Cpl., e.g.
  - 19 Rotten to the core
  - 22 Has too much, briefly
  - 23 Bleacher bum, e.g.
  - 25 North Korea-China border river
  - 26 One of the Brontes
  - 28 Way around London
  - 30 What 2-Downs signify
  - 33 Freudian "I"
  - 34 Fry cook's workplace flavor
  - 36 Tap option
  - 37 "Phantasy Star" gamemaker
  - 39 Disney collectibles
  - 40 Tourney favorites
  - 43 Symbol in a URL
  - 44 One of two in a 45-Across feature
  - 45 Countertop material
  - 46 King Arthur's paradise
  - 47 Like half-price bread, perhaps
  - 49 Tarzan et al.
  - 52 Bricks quantity
  - 53 Range where vicunas roam
  - 55 Dark area in an eclipse
  - 56 Wearers of dog tags, briefly
  - 59 Pill bottle datum
  - 60 Part of a drum brake
  - 62 "Able was I..."
  - 63 Place for a 36-Down
  - 64 Sassy talk
  - 65 Cariou of "Blue Bloods"

- © Andrews McMeel 4/7
- Answers: Call 1-900-988-8300, 99 cents a minute; or, with a credit card, 1-800-320-4280.

### WORD ROUNDUP

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

- Find and Circle:
- Four types of TV shows
  - Four six-letter colors
  - Three punctuation marks
  - Three dwarf planets
  - Three four-letter countries

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### QUICKCROSS

By John Wilmes

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[mobilegames.usatoday.com](http://mobilegames.usatoday.com)

### UP & DOWN WORDS

By David L. Hoyt and Russell L. Hoyt

1. SQUEAKY
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
- MAGAZINE

- Clues:
- Spotless
  - Complete removal from a situation
  - Crack, as an egg
  - Disney song: "Love Is An \_\_\_\_\_"
  - It can be awarded at a party, dance, etc.
  - Cash award
  - It was first published in 1972

PLAY ONLINE  
[PUZZLES.USATODAY.COM](http://PUZZLES.USATODAY.COM)

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### SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (no repeats).

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Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1 through 6 (no repeats).

DIFFICULTY RATING ★★☆☆☆

SUDOKU FUSION ON YOUR PHONE  
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### TXTPERT

- Across
- 2. 273399
  - 4. 8486337
  - 7. 886372
  - 8. 423
  - 9. 3339
  - 10. 379
- Down
- 1. 938
  - 2. 25878379
  - 3. 393
  - 5. 33673
  - 6. 6453

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Today's theme  
**Weather**

Use the phone keypad to decode the clues. For example: 2 could be A, B or C... and 5678 could be LOST

### DON'T QUOTE ME

Author Dorothy Parker offers this relationship advice.

Rearrange the words to complete the quote.

AWAY CLUTCH DARTS FINGERS HAND QUICKSILVER STAYS

“LOVE IS LIKE \_\_\_\_\_ IN THE \_\_\_\_\_ LEAVE THE \_\_\_\_\_ OPEN AND IT \_\_\_\_\_ IT, AND IT \_\_\_\_\_”

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