

The New Hampshire Gazette

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The Fortnightly Rant

Are You Ready For Some Zombie Robots?

A certain competing publication has named the #MeToo Silence Breakers as its Person [sic] of the Year.

In doing so, the magazine in question is declaring that “for better or for worse [women speaking out against rape, sexual harassment, unequal treatment in the workplace, and general lack of respect have] done the most to influence the events of the year.”

To forestall any possible confusion, let's establish this right now: *Time's* editors were lauding women for publicly exposing bad behavior by men. In these binary times there is almost certainly someone—*Breitbart.com*, perhaps?—who is condemning the women for their temerity.

In addition to being a textbook example of subject-verb disagreement, *Time's* selection represents a rather pronounced case of wishful thinking. To be sure, the originators of any given publishing gimmick are free to use or misuse it any way they like. Such are the glories of life under the First Amendment. Having enjoyed that proviso's benefits for 226 years now, we would be loathe to deny it to others.

The women in question certainly deserve to be recognized, but to suggest that by doing so they have effected some sea change in behavior is, if not wishful thinking, at least premature. If the day ever comes when the playing field has been made level, we'll all know it by our bewildered disorientation.

It seems far more likely that women are doomed to go on struggling against the retrograde behavior so characteristic of Y-chromosome-humans well into the indefinite future. It's like *Casablanca* in reverse: Rick and Ilsa will always have Paris to remember; we mere mortals will always have a gender-neutral nirvana to anticipate.

Unless the Zombie Robots get us first.

While the heirs of Henry Luce—who was, let it not be forgotten, one of the 20th century's more pernicious propagandists—fiddle around with the “for better” side of the Person of the Year gimmick, we, playing to our strength and natural inclination, will explore the “for worse” side.

We struggle today with the question of how men and women can amicably work side by side while earning their daily bread. Perhaps both genders should take a moment to ponder whether their work is preparing the way for a

far greater rival—one that eats no bread at all.

Kids these days are being told they should learn to write computer code for job security. As with so much that is said to young people, this advice is Delphically unhelpful.

Yesterday's computer programmers wrote the software that allows today's employers to create the unpredictable schedules which enable today's 24/7 gig economy. Part-time, minimum-wage employees now enjoy about as much autonomy as the sharecroppers Walker Evans photographed. The digit-shufflers who wrote that scheduling code may tell themselves that their skills will exempt them from the system they're creating. Who among us can live without the comfort of our illusions?

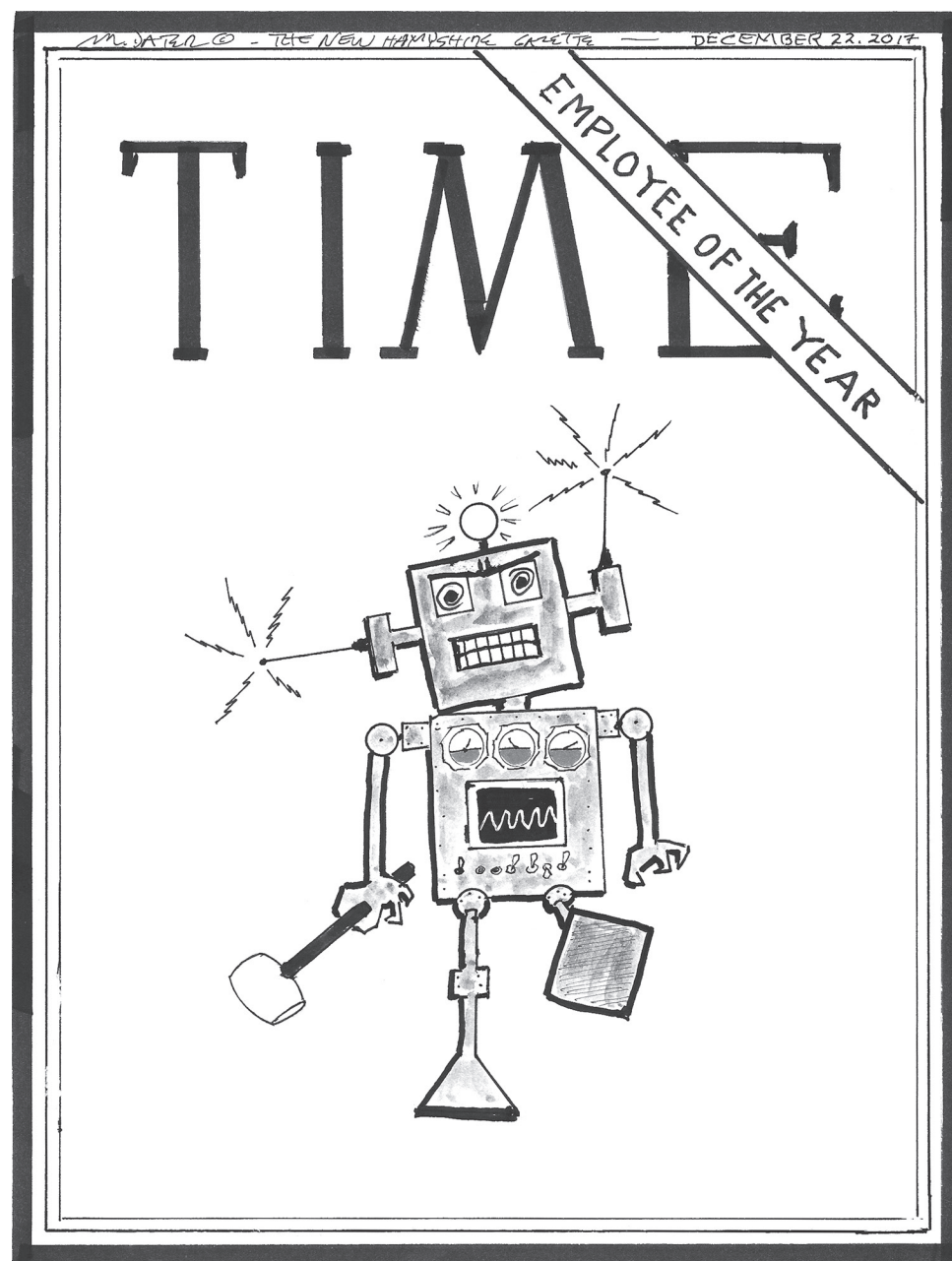
The code warriors who built Uber set traditionally-employed cab drivers down the path once taken by the artisanal buggy whip maker. The Uber drivers themselves are next—the company is developing software to operate self-driving automobiles. (Which, in our opinion, should be called automobiles).

It will only be a matter of time before self-driving tractor-trailer trucks will be hurtling down our highways, which should add another *frisson* of dread to the daily commute of those fortunate enough to still have jobs. And, once all the long-haul truckers have been fired, country music songwriters will be that much closer to obsolescence.

Thanks to today's hamster-wheel lives, most people haven't got the time to properly consider this threat. Others actually embrace it. Libertarians, for example, all seem to love Uber—because it is “liberating.” They seem to have no choice.

Then there's Bitcoin, the digital currency. Where to even begin with that? It's hard enough to grasp the basics of Econ 101, in which a person literally creates money whenever he writes a check. (No wonder money's tight—who writes checks anymore?) In the brave new world of Bitcoin, digital money is created when a robot—specifically, a computer—performs certain ... computations, in a process called Bitcoin mining.

The alleged value of a Bitcoin has skyrocketed this year. At least, so they tell us. Rising along with its value has been the number of computations required to sustain the system. Bitcoin mining requires electricity—a phenomenal amount of it. According to one



recent report, Bitcoin mining now consumes more electricity than Ireland.

The technology alone is frightening enough; perhaps more frightening is who's using it. Beneath the shiny surfaces of these new phenomena lurks some familiar, pre-digital code: the legal language which creates corporations.

Corporations, as Mitt Romney has reminded us, are people. What Mitt was too fastidious to mention is that corporations are dead people—and as George Romero taught us, dead people eat brains. Not to be alarmist, here, but it's humans versus zombies.

[If you think we're kidding about this, visit the Program on Corporations, Law, & Democracy at poclad.org.—The Ed.]

Now here's the bad news: the zombies were winning already, even before they got their dead hands on digital technology—not to mention artificial intelligence.

Humans are often able, in the world of science fiction, to overcome their differences, join forces, and repel alien invaders. We now live in a science fiction world of our own making. So, ask not for whom the atomic clock ticks—it ticks for all of us.

How shall we fight this menace? Any which way we can. At the very least, we should do our best to follow the admonition of Emilio, the Sage of Daniel Street: “If the robot makes it, let the robot buy it.”

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The Alleged News®

GOP Gives Nation a Murder/Suicide Pact for Christmas

Abandoning any pretense that a distinction can be made between their political thinking and their religious beliefs, and, further, making it clear that their religious beliefs are now wholly eschatological—which is to say, focused on the final events in the history of the world or of humankind—Congressional Republicans celebrated Christmas a few days early this year by giving the nation a murder/suicide pact.

Management regrets that it is unable to provide a less-insane explanation for what just happened in Washington, D.C. In our own self-interest, we ask the reader not to shoot the messenger. We can only work with the material which is put in front of us.

When in the course of human events a governing body decides to put itself in peril by attacking the people it is supposed to serve, it's enough to make even the incurious wonder. Here we'll try to make whatever sense of it we can. Before we get started, though, we must first go on record establishing that, although we are not the world's oldest democracy (that distinction belongs to Iceland, whose Althing was founded in the year 930, and by Vikings, no less!), nor the largest (India has more than twice as many voters as we have citizens), nevertheless the U.S. of A. is Number One: the Greatest Nation on Earth, &c., &c. All of that goes without saying (though woe betide the reckless scribe who fails to say it during even

the mildest of critiques).

Congress is hard to understand because there is widespread misperception of what it's actually like to work there. Properly seen, Congressional seats, whether in the House or the Senate, are the most prestigious telemarketing jobs in the world.

In fact, the work there is so odious that one must conclude that the jobs are desirable only because of the fringe benefits: the opportunity to be fawned over by ink-stained wretches, and a mysterious ability to become wealthy on a salary of \$174,000. A December 6th piece in the *Huffington Post* offered these telling details of the work:

“A PowerPoint presentation to incoming freshmen by the Democratic Congressional Campaign

Committee, obtained by *The Huffington Post*, lays out the dreary existence awaiting these new back-benchers. The daily schedule prescribed by the Democratic leadership contemplates a nine or 10-hour day while in Washington. Of that, four hours are to be spent in ‘call time’ and another hour is blocked off for ‘strategic outreach,’ which includes fundraisers and press work.”

Campaign fundraising from Congressional offices is, of course, prohibited, because the appearance of propriety must be maintained at all times. Instead, Representatives are herded like sheep into cubicles in a call center, given a list of donors, handed a script, and told to start begging.

HuffPo asked Rep. John B. Larson [D-Conn.] to describe the process of dialing for dollars. “You might as well be putting bamboo shoots under my fingernails,” he said.

What is our point in relating such gruesome details? To point out that, if submission to torture is a condition of employment, it's safe to assume that the employee is not the top dog in the power equation.

Those with the power—the ones who pick up the phone when the Members of Congress call—have been molding this process for decades. This is the way it is, because this is the way they want it—and they want it this way because it

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to page two

The Alleged News®
from page one

works for them.

Of course, this only works if you're able to pay. That is not a problem. It never has been. The Bible says, "ye have the poor always with you." Well, the rich are always with us, too, and that is no coincidence. Now they'll be even richer, because Congress just conveniently axed the estate tax.

Members of Congress hate this arrangement, or at least they say they do. Somehow, though, when one of them quits in disgust, there's always a willing replacement.

What about the voters? Those poor putzes get lip service: pie-in-the-sky promises which are tissue thin and patently phony, but somehow plausible enough on a quick first reading that corporate media drones can read them on-air without immediately breaking out in boils.

But wait! There's more! The voters also get a magic, miniscule tax cut that will vanish in a few years, probably just about the time the last

shreds of the dismantled safety net are ritually burned during the Cremation of Care ceremony at Bohemian Grove.

Logic suggests, for whatever that's worth, that this cruel betrayal will eventually result in a perceptible decline of support for the Republican Party. We're not holding our breath.

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**Welcome to the Slow-Motion Coup**

Traditionally, one of the high-priority elements of a successful coup has always been the seizure of radio and television broadcast facilities. All those tanks, troops, and planes are at risk if your opposition is still able to freely communicate with the population at large.

Radio and television are still powerful communication tools, but compared with the internet—particularly when it comes to grassroots political organization—they're about as relevant these days as a quill pen. (We can discuss the as-yet-unrealized political utility of newsprint at some later date.)

The FCC voted along party lines last week to overturn net neutrali-



Former one-term Governor Craig Benson's invitation to the Free State Project has finally paid off! Relief is here for all those last-minute shoppers perplexed by the challenge of finding a gift for the person who has everything except enough freedom to scratch his unrelenting libertarian itch. Here they are: small, laser-cut plywood boxes; a broad array of books on the superiority of libertarian theory; motivational posters to bolster belief in libertarian theory—it's all here. Bitcoin accepted, of course!

ty—which is to say, to allow corporations to take over the internet.

To inoculate ourselves against charges of paranoia, allow us to stipulate that we're not saying there's a coup underway which is being conducted by a shadowy network of conspirators. Rather, we're saying that there's a coup underway being conducted right out in the open.

At least 16 states are suing to reverse the ruling. New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu, a Republican, backs the ruling, saying "over regulation protects monopolies and hurts consumers." As usual, it's hard to tell if he really believes that—which wouldn't say much for his judgment—or he's just toeing the party line.

State Attorney General Gordon MacDonald snapped a smart salute in the general direction of the Governor and announced that his office would continue failing to protect New Hampshire citizens.

Ray Buckley, chair of the New Hampshire Democratic Party, slammed Sununu's stance. He was even so rude as to bring up the fact that the Governor's brother, former Senator John E. Sununu, sits on the board of the media behemoth Time Warner—no conflict of interest there.

We hope the following piece may be of interest to our readers.

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Net Neutrality: Gandhi's Salt For US
by Rivera Sun

Net Neutrality is the keystone issue in the movement of movements. It is poised to become as pivotal to our interconnected struggles as the Salt March was for Gandhi and the Indian Self-Rule Movement.

Last week, the FCC repealed Net Neutrality rules in blatant disregard of the 83 percent of U.S. citizens who declared support for Net Neutrality. Overlooked for years, often misunderstood, Net Neutrality is as

ubiquitous to our lives as salt was to Gandhi's India. And the corporate state, our version of the tyrannical British Empire, might have just blundered into their undoing.

The end of Net Neutrality is as odious to us as the British Colonial government's monopoly on salt was to the Indians. Salt was an essential ingredient for preserving life and health in humid, pre-refrigeration India. Net Neutrality and classifying the internet as a public utility is essential for fair, affordable, and equal access to the internet, and thus, the life of U.S. citizens, as well as our innovation, creativity, information, education, research, marketplace, exchange, dialogue, organizing, and so much more.

Telecom giants like Comcast and Verizon have sought the end of Net Neutrality for years. This allows them to create a two-tiered system of internet access, charging people for "fast lanes" and relegating ev-

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everything else into “slow lanes.” The chilling effect this will have on our economy, research, movements, and society is incalculable. It is a massive advance for the corporate state’s takeover and privatization of all sectors of our nation. With it, they can control everything we see (or don’t see) through their greed. Money buys society in the capitalist world. For years, the internet has opened up arenas of public space beyond what money can buy. The sheer volume of non-commercialized creativity and information online is staggering. It matches the incredible resources of the early commons. And, like the commons, the greedy have found a way to enclose them and charge us more and more for access.

Gandhi’s Salt Campaign offers us a model of how to get out of this mess—not just from the odious injustice of the end of Net Neutrality, but also from the tyranny of corporate rule. In 1930, salt was a keystone, yet stealth issue. When the Indian National Congress tasked Mohandas K. Gandhi with planning a new campaign against the British Empire’s colonial rule, no one expected the Salt Satyagraha would unravel the empire that the sun never set upon. Even Gandhi’s

buddies were skeptical about salt. As for Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, he famously stated that he wouldn’t lose any sleep over salt.

Instead, he lost the country.

Salt was an unexpected issue, but it touched every Indian citizen’s life. And, when Gandhi announced that he was going to use civil disobedience to directly disobey the “odious salt laws” and render them unenforceable through mass noncooperation, millions of ordinary Indians cheered. In defiance of the salt laws, they made, sold, and bought salt. Even more importantly, they openly refused to obey the British Empire and thus ousted the Brits from authority. This showed the Indians what Gandhi had been saying for decades: a paltry hundred thousand British cannot rule over 320 million Indians without the Indians’ cooperation. Deny your support, and British rule will crumble.

Fast forward to contemporary United States, which also has 320 million people and faces a parallel of colonial rule in the corporate state. In the case of telecom giants like Verizon and Comcast, well, they’re enjoying a monopoly on our modern-day salt of internet access. With the repeal of Net Neutrality, they’re



positioned to do like the British and start charging us for something we need for everyday life and survival.

But we can pull a Gandhi and make salt.

The Salt Satyagraha combined what’s known as constructive program and an obstructive program of civil disobedience to unjust laws. The Indians made salt (constructive) and broke the law en masse (obstructive). They marched, demonstrated, protested, wrote essays and made speeches about salt, using those acts of protest and persuasion to connect the issue of the salt laws with the need to end British rule.

We can do the same with Net Neutrality. We can “make salt” by supporting and building out local community broadband. This is already being done in many poor rural and urban communities that were ignored and marginalized by telecom giants seeking bigger profits in wealthier areas. Support this effort. It is needed in both the short and long term for breaking the telecom giants’ monopolies and putting more

diverse and democratic control into our internet.

We can defy en masse the corporate state’s attempt at colonial exploitation of U.S. citizens. Governor of Washington State Jay Inslee just announced a plan of action to uphold Net Neutrality standards in defiance of the FCC. California Senator Scott Wiener plans to introduce similar legislation in January. Support a similar effort in your state. These will be vitally important in reinstating Net Neutrality not just through the FCC, but as a long-term industry standard.

We can also pressure our Congress Members to use the Congressional Review Act to pass a “resolution of disapproval” that overturns the FCC decision in the next 60 days. We can also support the state-led lawsuits against the FCC.

Perhaps most importantly, we can connect the issue of Net Neutrality with the bigger problem of corporate control. In our protests, marches, demonstrations, online posts, articles, and discussions we need to

make the connection known: we are being ruled over by a corporate state that has ended citizen democracy in the United States. If, like Gandhi and the Indians, we wish to cease being a colony (of corporations in our case) and implement democratic self-rule, we need to make sure every one of our fellow citizens sees the repeal of Net Neutrality as a symbol of the greed and corruption of corporate rule.

The struggle ahead of us is challenging ... and vitally important to our lives. Take heart from the example of salt. Use it to take action today. When we organize, we win, as Popular Resistance founders and Net Neutrality campaigners Margaret Flowers and Kevin Zeese say.

Net Neutrality is our salt. Let’s use it to end corporate rule.

Author/Activist Rivera Sun, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of *The Dandelion Insurrection* and other books. Her work can be found at riverasun.com.



Hundreds gathered at the State Pier on Saturday, December 16th, to remember Peter “PJ” Johnson. No one who knew him showed any surprise at the size of the throng that assembled. A masterful hand at guiding ships up the challenging Piscataqua, rescuing skiers on Cannon Mountain, and fighting fires in Kittery, perhaps his truest calling was making friends.

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How to Destroy Public Education
To the Editor:
If a contractor did a good job for you but a bad job for your neighbor would you force your neighbor to keep re-hiring the same contractor? Would you tell your neighbor to hire a second contractor to follow the first and fix the first contractor's poor work? No.
But this is what happens with children's education. Many public schools fail to provide a good educational opportunity to all students. And parents have to make up for public school deficiencies if they can.

Children and society both suffer when children are poorly educated. Poorly educated people often struggle to support themselves; too often they become a burden on others or even become criminals who hurt people and drive up taxpayer expenses for police, courts, prisons, etc.

Some parents can afford to hire tutors, purchase study aids, or send their children to other schools; many cannot. I know a family, in an excellent Connecticut school district, that feels the school is failing one of their children, but can't, without help, afford a private school.

We're Americans; it's beneath us to allow each child to be denied a chance for a decent education. But decades of increased public school funding shows that our public schools can't, or don't care enough to, offer a good education to each student.

We can and must do better.
The New Hampshire House has proposed a new five-year pilot program to address this problem. This program is limited to students from poorer families (no more than 300 percent of poverty) meeting certain criteria, e.g., attends an under-performing school.

This program allows parents to establish Education Freedom Spending Accounts (ESAs) funded with the state's per student funding money. The ESA can be used for homeschooling, tutors, online courses, courses at public schools, tuition at a non-public school, or other qualified expenses. The program is only open to current public school students who, if approved,

withdraw from their public school. Student educations are monitored to ensure appropriate progress.
Importantly, the impact on a local public school is negligible; the loss of state funding is limited to no more than one-quarter of one percent of the school district's annual budget, typically less impact than from year to year student population changes.

SB 193 addresses the concerns about financial impact on the public schools while providing a remedy for students failed by public schools. New Hampshire must do better for all students, and this program has helped students elsewhere. This pilot program is proposed by the House Amendment to SB 193 which will be up for a vote in early January.

Please tell your representatives to support SB 193.

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.

Don:
This atomized, me-first, devil-take-the-hindmost attitude would have repulsed the Founding Fathers—never mind the Founding Mothers.

The solution to the problem of mediocre public schools is to improve public schools.
The Editor

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Justice and Comedian Thought Alike
To the Editor:

The late great comedian Robin Williams once weighed in on the influence of corrupting money in politics by quipping, "Politicians should wear sponsor jackets like Nascar Drivers. Then we know who owns them." The late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis remarked, long before Robin Williams came along, "We can have a democratic society or we can have the concentration of great wealth in the hands of the few. We cannot have both."

Unfortunately, the latter option has been chosen for us by the few who are in possession of the great wealth and the politicians who share a symbiotic relationship with them, putting our democratic society in great peril.

Extremely slack campaign finance laws and the Supreme Court's disastrous Citizens United decision, which



amounted to sanctioned bribery under the guise of equating unlimited use of money to free speech, has enabled dark, corrupting money to rain down on politics and government from major industries (fossil fuels, health insurance, pharmaceutical, agricultural, defense and gun manufacturing), whose special interests (i.e. to keep the "concentration of great wealth in the hands of the few") aren't at all aligned with the interests of ordinary American citizens.

Nowhere is this more evident than the Republicans' repeated failed attempts to mean-spiritedly repeal the Affordable Care Act or their recent successful passage, by two votes in the middle of the night, of their disgusting tax plan heavily weighted towards the one percent.

It is well worth mentioning—and maybe Republicans in Congress should be wearing Koch Brother jackets per Williams' suggestion—that the Republican leadership was recently warned by the Koch Brother alliance that the "piggy bank was going to be closed for business if the Republicans did not cut taxes for the wealthy and repeal Obamacare much sooner than later."

So, while the Republicans finally lied, cheated and stole their way to a \$1.5 trillion giveaway to the wealthy, Medicare funding will be slashed, Children's Healthcare will be gutted, deductions for student loans will be eliminated and Social Security will be cut—hardly a recipe for a democratic society.

Wayne H. Merritt
Dover, N.H.

Wayne:
Now you've got us imagining the judicial equivalent of Fantasy Football: Supreme Court Justices Robin Williams, George Carlin, Richard Pryor, Dick Gregory....
Would that it could be so.
The Editor

Coming of Age 60 Years Ago
To the Editor:

When I was a boy becoming a man in the late-fifties-early-sixties, women were supposed to be sexually pure and virginal until they got married. Just before the birth control pill liberated women from unintended pregnancy, a "good girl" said "no." But teenagers still engaged in sex with each other, risky as that might be, for risk is not much of a deterrent to youth. How did a "good" young woman keep her good reputation if she had sex with a "good" young man?

The game was that she would say "no;" he would continue seducing; they would finally kiss, and she, overwhelmed by his romancing, would melt into his arms. We saw the game in countless mainstream Hollywood movies. The girl had plausible cover for her reputation by saying she had fallen in love with him. The guy gained the valued reputation of being a successful hunter.

Both men and women were oppressed by these role model expectations. As a young man, I felt that I was obliged to take the initiative and pursue a woman or remain solitary alone. No woman would have initiated a coffee invitation. Women had to dress and act provocatively around a man they were interested in to incite his pursuit. And her initial reaction to his pursuit would always start with a "no." Complicated game? Head-banging confusion!

So when Baby Boomer men get accused of inappropriate sexual misconduct—I'm talking about an extended embrace, not a forcible rape—one needs to appreciate the social mores from which they came of age. A few years later, those same men carried banners marching in favor of equal rights for women, but intimate, per-

sonal attitudes were slower to change.

I'm glad the change toward gender equality is continuing, even accelerating at this moment, but some good men are being discharged for relatively minor infractions along with some beastly scoundrels. And some beasts, whose strategy is denial and denigration of accusers, continue to be given the highest public honors of the land. That just ain't right, nor is it just.

Let us note that Senator Al Franken did apologize to his first accuser, the lady in the flak jacket, years ago, immediately after it happened. He followed up with a written apology that she accepted and the incident was over. Now, years later, she is a Republican talk-show host and she re-opens the accusation? How many other accusers have been motivated by a Republican cabal to denigrate effective Democratic office holders?

Bruce Joffe
Piedmont, Calif.

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N.H.'s New, Thinly Disguised Poll Tax
To the Editor:

While we're all outraged at the Republican tax bill which apparently (at this writing) will be jammed down our throats shortly, something less visible but equally insidious, is a local bill being pushed by the Republican Party here in New Hampshire. It is called HB 372. Its aim is to discourage students from voting, but of course the Republicans won't tell you that. A lot of legal mumbo-jumbo inside HB 372 concerns the definition of "resident" which, when you untangle all the mumbo-jumbo, requires students to have a New Hampshire driver's license to vote. Heretofore students were only required to have a valid student ID to vote.

Remember poll taxes, which are

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— Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

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Years: Five; Change: None

To the Editor:

Today is the fifth anniversary since the slaughter of 20 children and six staff at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Since that tragic day there have been 1,518 acts of gun violence involving four or more victims, totaling 1,788 killed and 6,333 wounded (Gun Violence Archives). The most recent mass shootings in Las Vegas, Nevada, Ranch Tehana, Texas, Orlando, Florida and elsewhere resulted in fleeting media coverage and calls for more sane gun violence prevention laws being quickly dismissed and mostly ignored. In fact, the House of Representatives has taken steps to weaken the existing gun laws by passing a concealed carry law that would allow individuals to carry concealed weapons in every state regardless of that state's laws. Also, the move to ban the bump-stock device, that can quickly and easily convert a semi-automatic weapon into a fully automatic weapon, has stalled in the Senate.

Gun advocates including Donald Trump and the NRA, continue to regard the epidemic of gun violence in America as strictly a mental health problem, not a gun problem. Actually it is both. From a mental health perspective, we have two serious mental health issues involved. One involves the mental health status of those who perpetrate acts mass gun violence. The second involves political leaders and policy makers whose mental illness is displayed by a pathological denial of the reality that stares them in the face. The United States represents 4.4 percent of the global population, but has 42 percent of civilian-owned guns. Other nations with similar rates of mental illness and large civilian-owned guns have much lower rates of gun re-

lated homicides. For example, Switzerland's rate of gun related homicides per million people is 7.7, Canada, 5.1, Germany, 1.9 and the U.S. 29.7 (WHO). Clearly, the combination of a weak mental health system and the unrestricted access to weapons, including military-style assault weapons by almost anyone in America, is a reality that cannot be ignored by sane people. To even further their pathological denial, Congress has banned the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention from conducting any research into this critical public health problem. They are also in the process of weakening our health care system that will exacerbate the problem of access to mental health care. Talk about having a mental health problem, this tops the list.

Today, I stop to remember and mourn those 20 beautiful children lost to senseless gun violence, knowing that it very well could have been my grandchild. I also stop to condemn those who have the power to curtail this violence, but refuse to do so because of political expediency, ignorance or financial gain. They have the blood of these children and the many other victims of gun violence on their hands.

Rich DiPentima
Portsmouth, N.H.

You Shouldn't Have to Fight With Your Reps

To the Editor:

On Thursday, as I dropped my daughters off to their respective college finals, I listened to Joshua Johnson's 1A on Public Radio. It was the 5th anniversary of the Sandy Hook massacre, and the show was focused on our the effects our gun culture has on the state of school safety. You can hear the segment here: <https://the1a.org/shows/2017-12-14/five-years-after-sandy-hook-are-schools-safer>.

At one point, Johnson played a message left by Susan Baskett, the vice president of the Ann Arbor school

board. Ms. Baskett called in to say that her board has been very busy trying to ensure that the students in her district are safe from gun violence while they're in school. Something she said has stuck with me ever since I heard it: "... we've also passed resolutions fighting any laws or opportunities to bring guns into schools ... we've invested in a court case ... to prevent guns from being carried into schools. We continue to fight this battle daily with our legislators" Sit with that for a moment, would you? Fight this battle. Fight this battle with our legislators. They are fighting their lawmakers for the literal lives of their schoolchildren. This is absolutely stunning to me.

I am a legislator; I am heading into the second year of my first term as a New Hampshire State Representative. I'm writing to tell you that I think it is abhorrent and unconscionable that anyone should have to fight with their lawmakers about issues of basic safety, health, or decency.

We should not have to call our representatives on a regular basis to beg for our lives. We need lawmakers who are responsive to our needs; who do not rally to pass a tax cut plan that will devastate poor and working-class people, who prioritize funding CHIP and other support programs for the poor, and who recognize that the time is long past for tough, rational gun legislation. Everyone does better when everyone does better. We all benefit from healthy, productive, thriving communities that are responsive to all of our needs. If your representative isn't fighting for your health, your safety, your opportunity, and your security, you need new representatives.

Sherry Frost
NH State Representative, Ward 4
Dover, N.H.

A Plan for 100 Percent Renewable Energy in New Hampshire by 2040

To the Editor:

A New Hampshire energy plan is not something many residents have heard much about. Despite the progress made in many areas, it seems that for every two steps forward, our state


takes one step back. The state is currently updating its "10 Year State Energy Strategy" plan, which touches on all the important areas, but lacks a clear timeline or specific target dates. This is because our political leaders cannot agree on a New Hampshire energy plan with the kind of vision for New Hampshire's energy future that would attract new and innovative companies from the renewable energy or energy efficiency sectors. Such a plan, if it is bold and sets challenging goals, would reduce New Hampshire electricity bills by pushing down demand and using energy more efficiently. Such a plan would also inspire young people to come and/or stay in New Hampshire to work for such companies.

One of the reasons I joined the ST&E (Science, Technology & Energy) Committee of the House was because as a physicist I hoped to find less partisan infighting and more agreement about scientific issues. I was disappointed. Instead of listening to former Senator Ayotte's call to Republicans to concede the fact that Climate Change is real and primarily caused by humans, and moving on to investing in energy efficiency and renewable energy, I have discovered that many committee members prefer a political ideology over science. I for one will put my trust in scientists and science over politicians any day, because science happens whether one believes it or not. That is why I am sponsoring a bill to create a committee to: A) inventory all of New Hampshire's in-state renewable energy (RE) assets, *e.g.* solar, biomass, hydro, wind energy (both on land and in the Gulf of Maine), biofuels and efficiency measures, B) identify how more energy could be produced, if current restrictions were changed, C) look at the projected price declines for RE and the new emerging technologies, *e.g.* grid-level and residential battery storage, decentralized microgrids using blockchain applications, D) bring utilities together to discuss how they would meet a 2040 goal of 100 percent renewable electricity, and E)

Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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The Northcountry Chronicle

Armageddon II (or III)

by William Marvel

When my father retired from the Navy and we moved back to Davis Hill, my mother bought a copy of *Five Acres and Independence*. The rural rituals of gardening and canning inspired by that book soon doubled as elements of our nuclear survival plan, as Civil Defense handbooks on fallout shelters began piling up on my father's workbench in the cellar.

During one of the layoffs then endemic in the proletarian corners of Conway, he came home one day with his pickup full of rough-cut lumber, with which he built five bays of shelves in the cellar, three feet deep and five tiers high. By the first frost they were filled with some 200 glass canning jars containing a variegated collection of garden vegetables. Canvas Navy cots and blankets lay folded nearby. At the time our water tank was a 500-gallon boiler, and the old man affixed a spigot so we could draw water by gravity flow when the power went out.

As futile as it may have been, it seemed only prudent to take precautions with an evil empire out there, led by a maniac who promised to "bury" us and pulled his shoe off to pound his desk at the United Nations with it. Today it seems just as prudent to take precautions with a Korean Caligula and America's answer to Mad King Ludwig throwing childish taunts at each other. I didn't wait for the name-calling, however. Only weeks after the election—as my ancestors must have sensed in 1860—I began to suspect that raging radicals were dragging our society toward some manner of civil war or apocalyptic anarchy. Given the daily diet of insane assaults on every imaginable democratic tradition, that seems more likely than nuclear conflict even now.

Those wooden shelves still stand in the cellar, and last winter I started restocking them. C-rations are no longer available, drat the luck, and MREs are awfully expensive, but some canned food is still reasonably priced if not overly nutritious. Black beans take up the most space right

now; while the outside world confronts the threat of fallout or fratricide, our main peril in the bunker will be flatulence. My wife muttered something about taking her chances with the radiation.

The canned food only fills two of the 25 shelves so far, and I'll have to do a lot of cleaning out before adding to the stockpile. After the hysteria of the 1950s passed, we ate all my mother's canned vegetables and stopped replacing them, but as my father pattered in the cellar he filled those shelves with a vast assortment of materials that might eventually serve some purpose. When he died, they were chock full of paint cans, machine parts, electric motors, rolls of plastic, felt, rubber and many unidentifiable materials. I carted truckloads of it to the transfer station and gave much of it away, but never seemed to make a dent in the collection.

To make room in the bunker, I recently resumed pulling out some things to discard. First there was a

cheese-cutting board, complete with its own knife. Decades of furnace dust coated it, but when I brushed it off it proved to be brand-new. It occurred to me that we didn't have a cheese-cutting board, so I laid it aside. Next I found some of those glass canning jars, complete with lids and wire bails. They seemed functional, if I could find some jar rubbers, so I put them beside the cutting board. Under a pile of yellowed manuals for obsolete appliances lay a bag full of old, tarnished silverware—mostly monogrammed with an "M." This had to be my father's share of my grandfather's estate, and of course I couldn't throw it out. A blue porcelain pan struck me as perfectly serviceable.

Late in the afternoon I took several armloads of things upstairs to clean them up. Once everything had been washed and polished, I found places in the kitchen for the cutting board, jars, silverware, pans, and other items before going back downstairs to make more space in

the bunker. My next discovery was those old Navy cots, which would be just as handy now as in 1957, so I dusted them off and put them back. Several cans of wood stains and finish still seemed viable, and since I periodically have to build a new bookcase I left them where they were. Same thing with the shelf of antique, wooden-threaded clamps; they still work.

I was still rummaging around down there at 8:00 p.m., when my wife finally came home from work, but there wasn't much more room on the shelves yet. We could only survive a few weeks on the supplies we have right now, but if I keep puttering away long enough all those international and domestic tensions might calm down, as they did while my father prepared that first fallout shelter. Then I can spend another of those beautiful late-autumn days running up and down the stairs, moving the monogrammed silverware, the cutting board, the canning jars, pans, and a lot of our other kitchen clutter back down to the cellar shelves.

from page five

determine how much RE must be imported (from out of state) to meet a 2040 goal.

This is not the plan to reach that 2040 goal, but a planning tool and a roadmap to get us there. As the saying goes: "Every journey begins with the first step." This could be New Hampshire's first step, assuming we want to compete with other New England states, and do not decide to retreat from challenging goals. Other states are already far ahead of New Hampshire. Hawaii has already set a RE goal by 2050, while both California and New York could be legislating such targets by year's end. If we do not act soon, many surrounding states will start implementing



their plans, and we will lose control over our own future.

Our state has many of the elements needed for a viable plan: A) we currently import roughly \$2.9 billion dollars each year of fossil fuel products, that could be replaced by in-state RE resources while creating new jobs, B) a viable biomass and small hydro industry, C) a strong solar and growing wind industry, D) a huge potential for Gulf of Maine off-shore wind energy, E) municipalities interested in community energy projects and efficiency upgrades and F) still largely untapped energy

efficiency measures, including between 10,000 to 30,000 low-income residents waiting for energy audits, with state and federal funding only 1000 each year. While some prefer to attack the plans of others, New Hampshire towns like Lancaster are already moving ahead.

Rep. Peter Somssich
Portsmouth, N.H.
Peter:
Considering the vandal we have in the Oval Office, we're glad the General Court is on the case.
The Editor

Greatest U-Turns in History
To the Editor:
We pulled off one of the greatest U-turns in history as Doug Jones eked out a victory over Roy Moore in the Alabama senatorial race.

Sixty-three percent of married women with children and 98 percent of Afro-Americans contributed to the win over Moore, who holds a reputation of preying on young teenagers. Distressingly, Moore was championed by our President, by Steve Bannon his former chief strategist, and the Republican National Committee.

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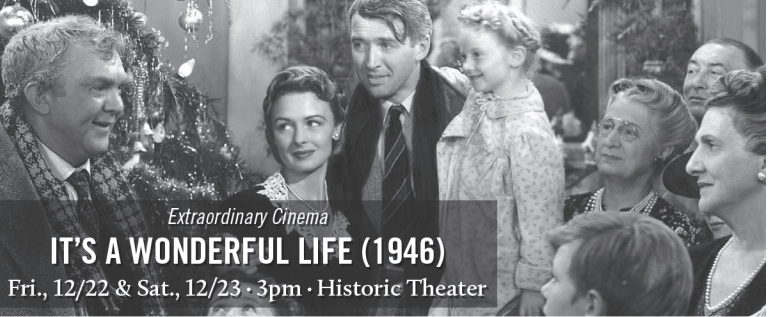
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Breakfast and beer

by Jim Hightower

Let's talk about two daily essentials: Breakfast and, of course, beer.

Mass marketers of breakfast cereals have been in a downward sales spiral for about a decade, so they're pitching their products as health food, hoping to woo millennials who want cereals with natural ingredients and no artificial additives. Some brands are seeking Good-For-

Ya credibility by buying out organic brands such as Kashi, consumed by Kellogg's. But the shift of this \$10-billion market to healthier alternatives is, in fact, an enormous, grassroots victory, driven by the organic movement, public interest groups, fearless nutritionists — and especially by countless moms, dads, and kids who simply refused to swallow the industry's crap.

Now—beer! Last year, Anheuser-Busch InBev mounted a mul-

timillion-dollar coup on America. Not on our country, but on its name. For six months, the beer behemoth expropriated our nation's name for a tacky advertising campaign, re-branding its Budweiser product "America." But the PR ploy backfired when a flurry of stinging media stories pointed out that Bud is owned by a Brazilian consortium based in Belgium.

Undeterred by facts, BigBud announced that it has invested beau-

coup bucks here to improve its beer quality. Mostly, though, that enhancement has come from buying out ten local craft breweries. AB InBev grabbed these independent brew-makers because they represent the real beer of today's America, rapidly taking customers away from the giant purveyor of bland suds.

Indeed, sales figures tell the tale of Bud's beer bust: Last year the company sold 14 million barrels of Budweiser in the U.S. — down by a third

from its peak sales year. Meanwhile, craft breweries are gaining market share — production of their good beer was up 12 percent last year to 24 million barrels.

—==—

Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes The Hightower Lowdown, a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fights by America's ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Sign up at HightowerLowdown.org.

from page six

and said he'd submit to an ethics investigation. Franken pointed to the irony of his leaving while a man sitting in the Oval Office bragged about his history of sexual assaults on women—in lurid terms.

Yes, principle won over politics, but only by a flyspeck. It's deeply sickening that the Republican establishment promoted a candidate of Moore's ilk in the first place.

The emperor hath no clothes.

Mike Kulla

Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

Mike:

Jones, a Blue Dog, isn't much of a Democrat, and he's not likely to survive the 2020 election—but he's an elected Democrat in Alabama, by God, and that's nothing at which to sneeze.

The Editor

—==—

A Threat to Our Democracy

To the Editor:

The threat to our democracy grows as evidence collected by Special Counsel Robert Mueller increasingly indicates that Donald Trump colluded with Russia during the 2016 presidential campaign. In response, Trump acts like a street brawler who unhesitatingly hits below the belt to defeat those he sees as enemies. As he is progressively put in a corner by Mueller, Trump grows more desperate and swings wildly.

No one and nothing is too sacrosanct to escape Trump's flimsy and

unsubstantiated charges. He has attempted to defame respected pillars of our government such as the security services, the FBI, and the Department of Justice in an effort to end Mueller's investigation. Not surprisingly, Trump seems totally unconcerned about the amount of damage he does. Self interest rules.

Currently, the barrage of phony charges Trump levels finds an echo chamber in the far-right media. Trump speaks; they repeat what he says and try to amplify it. Back and forth, back and forth, each in turn trying to turn up the volume. The goal is to raise doubts and undermine the Mueller investigation. If successful, the trumped up (no pun intended) media campaign will provide cover for Trump to fire Robert Mueller in an effort to end the Russia probe. If successful, these attacks will weaken future attempts to impeach Trump by the House of Representatives.

If these cynical efforts to manipulate public opinion are successful and the Mueller investigation is derailed or ended, the American public will never know whether or not it has as its President a man who, for personal gain, was willing undermine our national interest by colluding with a hostile foreign power.

Gary Patton
Hampton, N.H.

Gary:

We beg to differ. If Trump fires Mueller, I think we'll know for sure.

The Editor

—==—

The Latest Crop of Judges

To the Editor:

Another Trump Circuit Court nominee was swept off the list this week. The latest in a parade of white males, who are mostly grossly unqualified, withdrew his name on Friday. Unlike the previous nominee, withdrawn by the White House, this fella had at least been in a court room—if only for a DWI charge.

Seemingly unfazed by blistering questioning from Representative Kennedy, a Republican from California, the nominee (currently a janitor at Trump Tower) did not seem to realize what he didn't know. He would have been a good fit for the administration. When asked what he knew about Habeas Corpus he replied that he had their first album but lost track of them when he left high school, a couple of years ago.

The White House Counsel claimed that questions about legal precedents and terms were "gotcha" questions and that the accusation

that his law degree was a mail order diploma from Aruba was fake news.

Fortunately for America when the nominee found out that he would have to wear a black gown in court he withdrew his name. He stated, "I'm not dressing up like a woman for anyone, especially Donald Trump."

David Potter

North Hampton, N.H.

David:

Do our editorial instincts betray us, or did you take liberties with a few of the alleged facts in this letter?

The Editor

—==—

Stop This Train Before It Crashes!

To the Editor:

Congressional and Senate Republicans are jamming their tax-cut scheme forward without concern about its destruction to our economy. It will accelerate the concentration of wealth to a few super-richies who finance election campaigns while the rest of us must pay for it with reduced government services and additional \$1.5 trillion of debt (that's 1.5 million million dollars).

Non-partisan economic analyses by the Joint Committee on Taxation, the Congressional Budget Office, the Tax Policy Center, the Penn-Warton Budget Model, and

hundreds of professional economists agree that the hoped-for economic stimulus will not cover the debt. Republicans cite only one study, by the partisan Tax Foundation, that projects 2.9 percent economic growth over ten years to pay for tax cuts. That has never happened with previous cuts. Moreover, the Federal Reserve's policy is to raise interest rates when growth exceeds 2 percent in order to avoid hyper-inflation.

Corporations, already holding a trillion dollars of cash, haven't invested in many new jobs. Giving them additional money through tax breaks won't increase their investment, it will only make the rich guys richer.

Republicans are trying to shove this destructive law down our throats, or up the other end of our alimentary canals, before it is finally written, before reading it, before analyzing it, and before considering public opinion. Republicans are not representing their voters. They are weakening the strength of our economy.

Bruce Joffe

Piedmont, Calif.

—==—

[The Editor would like to extend his sincere thanks to all the subscribers who have recently added words of encouragement to their renewals. As the year closes, we would also like to thank our cheerful and devoted volunteers, without whom none of these shenanigans could continue. —The Ed.]

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ADMIRAL FOWLE’S PISCATAQUA RIVER TIDAL GUIDE (NOT FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES)

Portsmouth, arguably the first town in this country not founded by religious extremists, is bounded on the north and east by the Piscataqua River, the second, third, or fourth fastest-flowing navigable river in the country, depending on

whom you choose to believe. The Piscataqua’s ferocious current is caused by the tide, which, in turn, is caused by the moon. The other player is a vast sunken valley — Great Bay — about ten miles upriver. Twice a day, the moon

drags about seventeen billion gallons of seawater — enough to fill 2,125,000 tanker trucks — up the river and into Great Bay. This creates a roving hydraulic conflict, as incoming sea and the outgoing river collide. The skirmish line

moves from the mouth of the river, up past New Castle, around the bend by the old Naval Prison, under Memorial Bridge, past the tugboats, and on into Great Bay. This can best be seen when the tide is rising.

Twice a day, too, the moon lets all that water go. All the seawater that just fought its way upstream goes back home to the ocean. This is when the Piscataqua earns its title for xth fastest current. Look for the red buoy, at the upstream end of

Badger’s Island, bobbing around in the current. It weighs several tons, and it bobs and bounces in the current like a cork. The river also has its placid moments, around high and low tides. When the river rests, its tugboats

and bridges work their hardest. Ships coming in laden with coal, oil, and salt do so at high tide, for more clearance under their keels. They leave empty, riding high in the water, at low tide, to squeeze under Memorial Bridge.

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<p>2003—Responding to credible intel, Mike Hayden tells his British counterpart to take over his NSA duties if al Qaeda nukes D.C. on Xmas.</p> <p>1992—George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush pardons Caspar “Cap” Weinberger, Bob McFarlane, and 4 other Iran-Contra creeps, coincidentally protecting his own sorry self.</p> <p>1979—The Soviet Army enters Afghanistan to prop up the Marxist government. Oops.</p> <p>1972—Albert E. Moore, a B-52 tail-gunner, becomes the last man to down a MiG 21 with machine guns.</p> <p>1971—Her airliner having fallen apart after being hit by lightning two miles above the Amazon, Julianne Koepcke, 17, falls into the jungle and survives with minor injuries.</p> <p>1970—Nine G.I.’s are KIA and 9 WIA by “friendly fire” in Vietnam.</p> <p>1968—The crew of <i>Apollo 8</i> photographs Earth rising behind the moon.</p> <p>1964—VC blow up the Brink Officers Quarters in downtown Saigon, killing two and injuring 107.</p> <p>1929—A West Wing Christmas party is cut short when tons of old pamphlets in storage since TR’s day burn.</p> <p>1913—During a union Christmas party at the Italian Hall in Calumet, Mich, thugs hired by copper bosses yell “Fire!” 73 die, 59 are kids.</p> <p>1883—Increasingly deranged since his stabbing by John Wilkes Booth during Lincoln’s assassination, Maj. Henry Rathbone murders his wife.</p>	<p>1989—Romania celebrates Christmas and freedom by putting former President Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena before a firing squad.</p> <p>1984—A Robinson R22 flying 500 feet over Huntsville, Ala., goes bang, falls apart, and plummets to earth, killing the pilot and a passenger.</p> <p>1978—Four Santa Clauses are arrested in Plymouth, Mass. for climbing the fence at a nuke plant.</p> <p>1974—Marshall Fields, wearing Arab garb, crashes a Chevy Impala through the White House fence and up to the North Portico. Four hours later he surrenders.</p> <p>1956—In Birmingham, Ala., civil rights activist Fred Shuttlesworth survives the bombing of his home.</p> <p>1951—In Mims, Fla., a bomb explodes under the home of NAACP leaders Harry T. and Harriette Moore on the night of their 25th anniversary. Both die, no one is indicted; the state concludes 55 years later that four long-dead Klansmen did it.</p> <p>1946—Demonstors at the White House demand the release of jailed conscientious objectors.</p> <p>1868—President Andrew Johnson issues unconditional pardons for all those involved in the “Southern Rebellion.”</p> <p>1914—German and British troops leave trenches, sing Christmas carols, shake hands, and share smokes.</p> <p>1802—In Portsmouth, N.H., 132 buildings are destroyed by fire.</p>	<p>2004—A massive tsunami kills 300,000 around the Indian Ocean.</p> <p>1996—From a pool of 1,500 candidates, the press selects JonBenet Ramsey as the most important child murdered in the U.S. this year.</p> <p>1991—The Supreme Soviet meets one last time and dissolves the USSR.</p> <p>1971—Disgruntled Vietnam Vets occupy the Statue of Liberty.</p> <p>1966—“American troops are the defense, protection and salvation not only of our country, but, I believe, of civilization itself,” says His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman.</p> <p>1966—<i>Time Magazine</i> names “The Younger Generation” the “Man of the Year,” further exacerbating a pandemic of unwarranted self-esteem.</p> <p>1919—Harry Frazee sells Babe Ruth to the New York Yankees.</p> <p>1917—Pres. Woodrow Wilson orders U.S. railroads seized for the duration of the war.</p> <p>1913—Writer and perennially-disgruntled Civil War veteran Ambrose Bierce allegedly pens one final letter before vanishing in Mexico.</p> <p>1908—Jack Johnson beats Tommy Burns in 14, becoming the first black heavyweight champ.</p> <p>1862—Under orders from President Lincoln, the U.S. Army hangs 39 Santee Lakota Sioux on one huge gallows.</p> <p>1787—An Carlisle, Pa., an anti-Federalist mob wielding barrel staves bludgeons and nearly kills Constitution-framer James Wilson.</p>	<p>1994—A Robinson R22 helicopter being flown “for pleasure” loses its tailboom over Zurich and crashes into an apartment building. Somehow only the pilot and a passenger die.</p> <p>1986—In San Diego, Cara Evelyn Knott is strangled by on-duty Highway Patrolman Craig Alan Peyer.</p> <p>1981—Supreme Court Associate Justice William H. Rehnquist checks into a hospital to kick his Placidyl habit and end the hallucinations.</p> <p>1900—Carrie Nation hatchets-up her first saloon, at the Carey Hotel, in Wichita, Kan.</p> <p>1895—In Bill Curtis’s St. Louis saloon, William “Billy” Lyons foolishly — and fatally — grabs “Stagger Lee” Shelton’s Stetson hat.</p> <p>1827—Georgia proclaims “the lands of Georgia belong to her absolutely. The Indians are tenants at her will.” Indulgent solons give the indigenous inhabitants three years to get west of the Mississippi.</p> <p>1763—Sixteen of the few living Conestoga Indians, huddled for protection in the Lancaster, Pa. workhouse, are mysteriously deserted by their guards. A mob known as “the Paxton Boys” hacks 14 of them, most-poorly children, to death. There is no investigation; no one is ever charged.</p> <p>1739—A large crowd gathers to witness New Hampshire’s first executions: Sarah Simpson and Penelope Kenny are hanged in Portsmouth for infanticide.</p>	<p>2013—Congress ends long-term unemployment benefits to 1.3 million Americans, damaging the economy to the tune of an estimated 240,000 jobs.</p> <p>1986—Terry Dolan, Republican critic of gay rights, dies of AIDS.</p> <p>1983—Dr. George Graham, of President Reagan’s Task Force on Food Assistance, says black children are “probably the best-nourished group in the U.S.”—citing athletes as proof.</p> <p>1973—The Akron, Ohio Chamber of Commerce denounces the Soap Box Derby as a cheat and a fraud.</p> <p>1971—At the White House, 88 ’Nam vets are busted for protesting their war.</p> <p>1948—A DC-3 disappears with 32 on board in an area soon known as the Bermuda Triangle.</p> <p>1945—Congress recognizes the “Pledge of Allegiance,” authored by Christian Socialist Francis Bellamy.</p> <p>1936—Sit-down strikers close Cleveland’s General Motors plant.</p> <p>1917—H.L. Mencken publishes a phony history of the bathtub, now widely accepted as gospel.</p> <p>1895—The Lumiere brothers screen the first commercial film.</p> <p>1879—As stagecoach driver “One-Eyed Charlie” Parkhurst, 67, is prepared for burial in Watsonville, Calif, it becomes clear that he was a she—namely, Charlotte Parkhurst, born in Lebanon, N.H. in 1812.</p> <p>1832—Vice President John C. Calhoun resigns to fight for “a perfect good”—slavery.</p>	<p>2006—The UK pays off its \$100,000,000 WWII debt to the U.S.</p> <p>1989—Playwright Vaclav Havel becomes President of Czechoslovakia.</p> <p>1975—Eleven people are killed and 74 wounded when a bomb explodes in a storage locker at LaGuardia Airport. The crime remains unsolved.</p> <p>1972—Operation Linebacker II, which R. Nixon will call “my terrible personal ordeal,” ends. U.S. losses: 15 downed B-52s, 12 other aircraft, 43 KIA, & 49 POWs.</p> <p>1930—Fred Newton arrives at New Orleans after swimming 1,826 miles down the Mississippi.</p> <p>1916—Poisoned, stabbed, beaten, shot three times, and thrown unconscious into the freezing Neva River, the Russian Tsarina Alexandra’s favorite faith-healer Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin dies by drowning.</p> <p>1900—Harvard prof Albert B. Hart says states where lynching is prevalent should legalize the practice to maintain order.</p> <p>1890—The 7th Cavalry massacres about 300 Lakota Sioux men, women, and children on their reservation at Wounded Knee. For this, a grateful nation bestows 20 Medals of Honor.</p> <p>1876—A poorly-designed, unspected railroad bridge collapses in Ashtabula, Ohio, killing 92.</p> <p>1837—In Buffalo, N.Y., Canadian militiamen burn the <i>U.S.S. Carolina</i>, which has been caught running guns to revolutionaries.</p>	<p>2015—At the North Pole, the temperature rises above 32° for six hours.</p> <p>2006—Saddam Hussein’s inelegant demise is captured by cellphone.</p> <p>1995—In Brookline, Mass., John Salvi lives out his “pro-life” creed by killing two health care workers.</p> <p>1978—A House Select Committee concludes that conspirators “probably” helped kill JFK and MLK.</p> <p>1971—Dan Ellsberg is indicted for having set the truth free.</p> <p>1947—Irgun fighters kill six Arabs and wound 42 in a grenade attack at a Haifa oil refinery. Arabs retaliate by beating 39 Jews to death.</p> <p>1936—The GM sit-down strike spreads from Cleveland to Flint.</p> <p>1935—Italian bombers, two piloted by sons of Il Duce, drop mustard gas on a Red Cross unit in Ethiopia.</p> <p>1924—Edwin Hubble announces that there are other galaxies.</p> <p>1922—Godless Commies establish the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the ruins of a pious Empire.</p> <p>1912—Lee Humiston, riding an Excelsior, becomes the first man to achieve 100 mph on a motorcycle.</p> <p>1905—A cabal of miners assassinate Idaho’s ex-Governor Frank Steuneger with a bomb at a gate to his house.</p> <p>1903—At 3:15 p.m. fire breaks out in Chicago’s new, “fireproof” Iroquois Theater. By 3:30, 600 people are dead.</p> <p>1768—Teacher Ruth Blay, 31, is hanged in Portsmouth for concealing the birth of her illegitimate child.</p>
<p>2:55 3:01</p> <p>8:51 9:21</p>	<p>3:40 3:51</p> <p>9:42 10:08</p>	<p>4:29 4:47</p> <p>10:36 11:00</p>	<p>5:23 5:46</p> <p>11:35 11:54</p>	<p>6:18 6:47</p> <p>12:34</p>	<p>7:14 7:47</p> <p>12:50 1:33</p>	<p>8:09 8:46</p> <p>1:46 2:30</p>
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31	MONDAY, JANUARY 1	TUESDAY, JANUARY 2	WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3	THURSDAY, JANUARY 4	FRIDAY, JANUARY 5	SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

1997—Quaker Oats pays \$1.8 million to settle a lawsuit over their secret feeding of radioactive oatmeal to developmentally-disabled kids.

1995—Bill and Monica enjoy their third tryst in a White House study.

1970—Congress repeals the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution.

1970—Associated Milk Producers, Inc. gets \$100 million in price supports in exchange for its \$2 million donation to the Nixon campaign.

1969—Brothers Dwight and Karl Armstrong drop home-made bombs from a stolen Cessna on a Wisconsin munitions plant. They fail to detonate.

1952—The Tuskegee Institute reports that for the first time since 1881, a year has passed without a lynching.

1947—The Israeli paramilitary outfit Haganah kills 20 to 70 Arabs in retaliation for the previous days’ Arab retaliation against an earlier Irgun attack against Arabs at a Haifa refinery.

1929—“I see nothing in the present situation that is either menacing or warrants pessimism,” says Treasury Secretary Andrew W. Mellon.

1904—At midnight, for the first time, a ball drops in Times Square to mark the New Year.

1901—This year’s U.S. lynching toll: worst ever—105 blacks, 25 whites.

1879—Edison shows off the first practical electric light bulb.

1761—Lydia (Hall) Fowle, wife of Daniel Fowle, dies in Portsmouth, aged 36.

2006—Speaking to amputee vets of his Iraq War, George W.[MD] Bush says “I have an injury myself [from] combat with a cedar. I eventually won.”

2006—A pilot with “extremely high levels of methamphetamine” in his blood crashes a Robinson R44 in Grand Ridge, Fla. He and two others die in a fiery explosion; 576 feet closer to I-10, and it might have been worse.

1995—An 80-foot-plus wave hits an oil platform in the North Sea.

1984—Ma Bell is broken up into 22 smaller units. It seemed like a good idea at the time.

1975—Nixon cronies H.R. Halde-man, John Ehrlichman, John Mitchell, and Robert Mardian are convicted in the Watergate cover-up trial.

1971—The pirate station Radio First Termer debuts from a Saigon brothel.

1959—Batista flees, and Fidel Castro takes over in Cuba.

1957—The AEC and USAF team up on Project Pluto. Its cruise missile, powered by an unshielded nuclear reactor, would spew radiation while dropping nukes on Commies.

1802—The people of Cheshire, Mass. present President Jefferson with a 1,234-lb. cheese.

1781—Troops at Morristown, N.J., seize artillery and march to confront Congress, seeking back pay.

1300—Pope Boniface VIII’s Jubilee is such a popular success that dozens must be executed to bring the mob under control.

1996—At Bill Clinton’s invitation, Monica Lewinsky drops by the Oval Office. Sequestered in the bathroom, they violate his marriage vows.

1972—During a one-hour interview on CBS, Richard Nixon tells Dan Rather that the bombing in Southeast Asia had been “very, very effective.” Next day in a note to Hank Kissinger, he tells the truth: “The result = zilch.”

1970—The Supreme Court nixes Gen. Hershey’s effort to reclassify all draft protestors as 1-A, or draftable.

1967—In Florida, 72 men are arrested, thwarting an invasion of Haiti financed by CBS in exchange for exclusive film rights of the landing.

1962—Outnumbered four to one, vastly outgunned, without helicopters or armor, 350 Viet Cong defeat U.S.-advised ARVN at Ap Bac.

1946—King Zog of Albania, the only head of state to have fired back at a would-be assassin, abdicates.

1923—As evidence of his corruption mounts, Interior Secretary Albert Fall resigns. President Harding then offers him a seat on the Supreme Court.

1920—U.S. Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer has thousands of alleged subversives arrested.

1905—The I.W.W., aka The Wobblies, “organize” in Chicago.

1882—Standard Oil reorganizes so as to allow John D. Rockefeller to keep his oil monopoly; laws be damned.

1872—Brigham Young is arrested for having 24 wives too many.

2006—Hotshot Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff pleads guilty to three felony counts for defrauding Indian tribes and bribing officials.

1990—Former CIA asset Manuel “The Panamanian Strongman™” Noriega, aka “The Pineapple,” surrenders to the forces of *El Jefe*, George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush.

1967—Jack Ruby conveniently dies in prison while awaiting retrial.

1966—Ronald Reagan announces for Governorship of California, claiming it leads in bankruptcies and has 40% higher unemployment than the rest of the country, neither of which is true.

1961—In Idaho, three military technicians are killed in a steam explosion at a nuclear reactor.

1955—The U.S. government announces that over 3,000 federal employees have been sacked to quell Joe McCarthy’s paranoia.

1943—Ball turret gunner SSGt. Alan Magee escapes without a parachute from a doomed B-17, falls 22,000 feet, and crashes through the roof of a St. Nazaire railroad station. He dies in 2003 at the age of 84.

1924—Grave robber/archaeologist Howard Carter gloms onto Tutankhamen’s gold coffin.

1892—J.R.R. Tolkien is born in Orange Free State, Africa.

1891—Oz author L. Frank Baum, writing in the Aberdeen (S.D.) *Saturday Pioneer*, calls for the “total extermination” of Native Americans.

2017—A frozen carburetor causes a Robinson R22 helicopter to stall over San Pedro Bay; it plummets, killing the pilot and a photographer.

1991—A Robinson R22 flying over Hukerenui, New Zealand makes “a loud noise,” sheds its main rotors, and plummets to earth. The pilot and a passenger perish in a fireball.

1971—George Mellendorf, in Vietnam, mails a letter to the White House complaining of slow mail delivery. His answer arrives in 1978.

1965—The Free Speech Movement holds its first legal rally.

1960—During a Minimum Interval Takeoff at Pease AFB, the second of three B-47s crashes and burns; four crewmen die.

1958—In a New York cab, ex-Commie, ex-McCarthy aide, and ex-editor of *Confidential* Howard Rushmore shoots his wife then himself.

1955—The U.S. agrees to pay Japan for nuking the Marshall Islands.

1933—Farmers in Primghar, Iowa, throw a rope around a banker’s neck and threaten to lynch him unless he promises to end foreclosures.

1903—Topsy the Elephant, unjustly accused of being a killer, is fitted with copper sandals, fed carrots laced with a pound of cyanide, and electrocuted by the owners of Luna Park at Coney Island. An Edison crew films the fun.

41 BC—Rome’s Emperor Caligula is murdered by his own disgruntled troops, incensed over unpaid wages.

2011—Shortly after he’s sworn in, Rep. Frank Guinta [R-N.H.] assures David Koch that he’ll attend a party being held for new employees Republican Congressmen.

1987—President Reagan produces the first trillion dollar budget. It includes a \$147 billion deficit.

1986—A Robinson R22 helicopter flying over Grenchen, Switzerland makes a noise “like ... a machine gun burst,” loses its tailboom, then crashes. The pilot and his wife die.

1970—Mine Workers Union presidential candidate Joe Yablonski is killed on orders of incumbent president “Tough” Tony Boyle.

1968—Feds indict Dr. Spock for expressing concern about the health of his ex-patients now in uniform.

1942—Mutual Broadcasting’s John B. Hughes begins an anti-Japanese-American radio campaign that results in the establishment of U.S. concentration camps.

1937—The Abraham Lincoln Brigade is formed to fight fascism—“prematurely,” some say.

1914—Henry Ford establishes the 8 hour day and \$5/day pay.

1825—As Alexander Dumas fights his first duel, his pants fall down.

1776—New Hampshire ratifies the nation’s first state constitution.

1781—Former American General Benedict Arnold assists the British in the burning and plundering of Richmond, Virginia.

2006—George W.[MD] Bush OKs \$20 million for a celebration of “success” in Iraq and Afghanistan.

2005—A switching error causes a 2:40 a.m. train wreck in Graniteville, S.C.; 60 tons of chlorine gas escape, killing nine immediately and one months later.

1986—One dies, 100 are injured in an accident at Kerr-McGee’s nuclear fuel plant in Oklahoma.

1970—The Supreme Court OKs suppression of an anti-war underground newspaper at Fort Bragg, N.C.

1960—A DC-6 crashes in North Carolina, brought down by a dynamite bomb. The case is still open.

1946—Thousands of active-duty GIs in the Philippines attempt to storm Headquarters in protest of slow re-deployment back to the U.S.

1944—RIP Ida Tarbell, muckraker, in Bridgeport, Conn.

1927—Freelance executioner Robert Greene Elliot electrocutes three convicts in Charlestown, Mass., then three more in Sing Sing, N.Y.

1927—U.S. Marines invade Nicaragua. Again.

1920—Birth of Reverend Sun Myung Moon, future Man-o’-God.

1895—Ex-Queen Liliuokalani is arrested in Hawaii after a failed coup against Sanford Dole.

1863—President-elect Franklin Pierce and his wife Jane survive an Andover, Mass. train derailment, but, with two sons dead already, see their third son dead, nearly decapitated.




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