

The New Hampshire Gazette

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Vol. CCLXII, No. 13
March 16, 2018

The Fortnightly Rant

The Showboating Must Go On

The Secretary of State was fired on Tuesday; he got the bad news by reading a tweet.

The State Department's Under Secretary for Public Affairs said Rex Tillerson "was unaware of the reason" why he was fired. It may have been because, just a day earlier, he had accused Russia of trying to murder one of its former spies in Britain. Being accused of murder might irk Vladimir Putin, the only person on Earth whom President Trump treats with deference. On the other hand it may simply have been because last October Tillerson incautiously called Trump "a moron."

Steve Goldstein, the Under Secretary who had spoken about Tillerson's firing, was then summarily fired himself. Goldstein's account of Tillerson's firing didn't match the one coming from the White House's. Someone had to go, and the President wasn't going to fire himself.

Tillerson will be replaced by CIA Director Mike Pompeo. Although his career as a Congressman was decidedly undistinguished, Pompeo seems to have the President's full confidence. Their affinity may spring from a shared characteristic: they both have a strong sense of unwarranted self-esteem.

Pompeo now faces the agonizing choice of what to do first. Break the agreement that shut down Iran's nuclear weapons program, thus demonstrating that American treaties are not worth the paper upon which they're written? Or attempt to topple Kim Jong Un, potentially unleashing a nuclear holocaust?

If he had any experience with critical thinking, he'd know that the choice is obvious. The treaty must be trashed first; after the bombs start going off, such diplomatic niceties will be much more difficult to organize.

Pompeo will be replaced at the CIA by Gina Haspel. This appointment, at least, makes sense. Haspel reportedly won't need much training. She already has hands-on experience torturing terror suspects.

People are streaming out of this Administration like paratroopers out of a plane. Monday morning, John McEntee got canned. This hitherto-obscure personal assistant to the President, who a day and a half earlier had been tending to chores as intimate as adjusting the President's clock to keep up with Daylight Saving Time, was frogmarched out of the White House on a cold winter day without even being allowed to retrieve a jacket.

Don't worry about McEntee, though—whatever heinous crime he committed to warrant such treatment, it wasn't bad enough to preclude his going directly to work for Trump's reelection campaign.

The President has been flying around the country, holding rallies in Pennsylvania and California. He appears to be enjoying himself tremendously, as do members of his audience. They all have been acting as if they were auditioning for parts in a period movie about Germany in the late 1930s. Trump might also think that if he's out of town, Bob Mueller won't be able to find him.

If that sounds paranoid, consider David Shulkin. The *Washington Post* reports that the Secretary of Veterans Affairs "is managing the government's second-largest bureaucracy from a fortified bunker atop the agency's Washington headquarters"—where an armed guard is posted outside his door.

Shulkin reportedly has been dodging Trump's political appointees, whom he does not trust, by canceling the morning meetings they attended: a expedient worthy of *Catch-22's* reclusive squadron commander Major Major Major Major, whose office was open to visitors only when he wasn't there.

The *Post* describes a VA at war with itself "over shifting more health care for veterans to the private sector." In other words, VA privatization.

As policy questions go, it's not that complicated. It just looks that way when corporate media describe it as an honest dispute over the best way to provide essential government-funded services. It's like school choice, but instead of kids hiding from guns you've got adults who used to carry them.

In both cases, the process is the same. Start by underfunding government services in the name of fiscal prudence (Note: This step is not applicable *vis-a-vis* the Defense Department.) Blame the government for the inevitable substandard results. Spin up some "demon-

stration programs" which divert tax dollars to private corporations, making the pre-existing funding shortage worse. Finally, pretend the private provider produces better results. Rinse and repeat and eventually the government program is gone—and statutory accountability with it. Nothing is left but private enterprise—against which the gods themselves contend in vain.

Stripped of the corporate media's blizzard of euphemisms, VA privatization is what grifters refer to as a long con; its aim is to convert the nation's veteran community into one more profit center. Said profits will accrue, of course, to shareholders. About them, little is known but this: the odds of their ever having served in uniform range from slim to none.

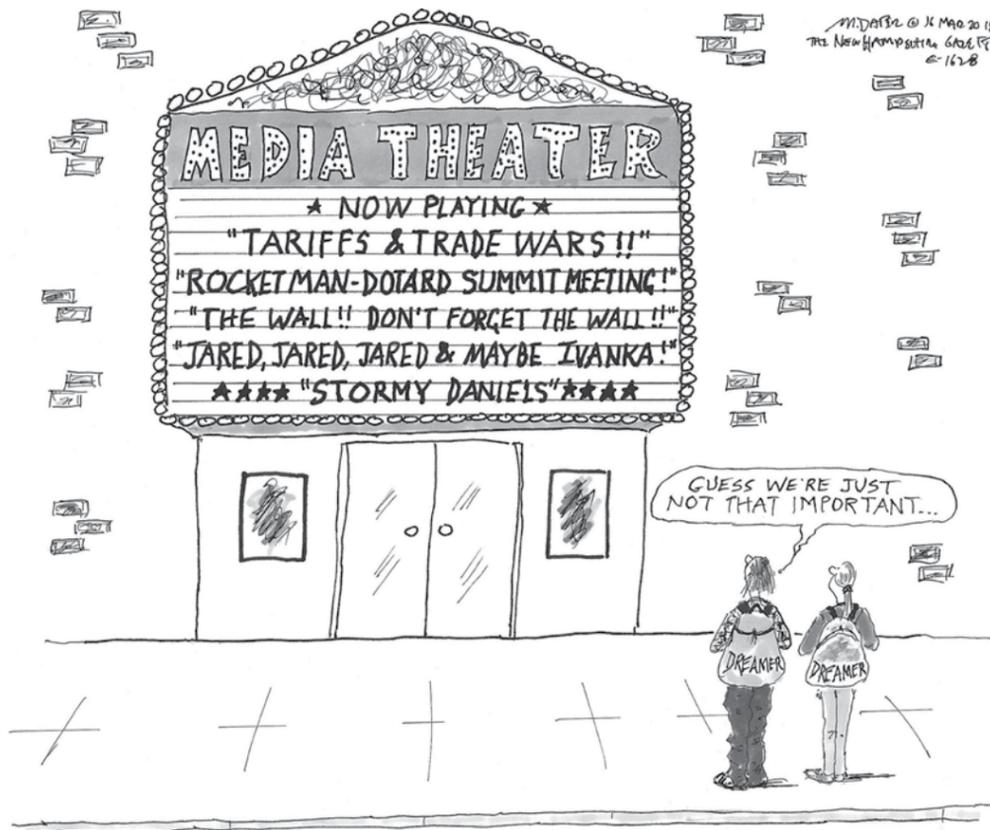
The American Legion and VFW—in fact, all the traditional veterans organizations—back Shulkin and oppose privatization.

One new outfit, Concerned Veterans for America [CV4A], wants Shulkin gone and backs privatization. We are shocked—shocked—to report that CV4A is backed by the libertarian Koch brothers, the Paladins of privatization.

By Wednesday morning Shulkin's fate seemed sealed. Rick Perry, his likely replacement, is pro-privatization. The VA is going on the block.

Meanwhile, plans are moving forward for a glorious and celebratory Veterans Day Parade which is expected to cost about \$40 million tax dollars—about \$1,000 each, divvied up and handed to the 40,000 vets who now live on our sidewalks. That won't happen, though, and perhaps it shouldn't.

This country needs a wakeup call. What clearer signal could be sent than to let our veterans die in the cold while ritually burning millions in their names?



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Opportunities Galore in the Fabulous First District

The nation edges ever closer to full employment—the proof is right here in this, the best of all possible Congressional Districts.

Even Frank Guinta is working, according to a press release. Voters fired him from his old job, as the First District's Congressman, a year ago last November. It was the second time he lost to Rochester Democrat Carol Shea-Porter.

Guinta, a Republican who previously was Mayor of Manchester, will now be working for ML Strategies LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Boston-based Mintz Levin.

ML Strategies employs about 1,000 employees, half of whom are lawyers. It bills itself as "a government relations consulting group with offices in Boston and Washington," which is the polite way to say it's a lobbying shop.

Euphemisms are apparently the stock in trade of Stephen P. Tocco, the Chairman and CEO of ML Strategies. A company press release quotes Tocco saying, "Frank is well-known and highly-respected by his former Congressional colleagues."

Well known? Well ... yes—but the honest term would be notorious. Not for nothing did the *Union Leader*—the most solidly-Republican paper imaginable—publish, on May 14, 2015, a signed editorial by Publisher Joe McQuaid which read, in full, "Frank Guinta is a damned liar." Guinta famously infamously and illegally loaned his own campaign \$355,000 of dubious origin, then lied about it through multiple election cycles.

Until we learn otherwise we'll have to assume that Guinta will be advising the clients of ML Strategies

on how to skirt the law while financing Congressional elections without incurring the inconvenience of jail time.

In other First District news, Matt "Hamlet" Mayberry has finally announced the results of a debate he's been having with himself since last May: he will not run for the Republicans' First District nomination. Instead he will be taking advantage of a great but not-further-defined business opportunity.

Our disappointment on learning we would be denied the pleasure of covering his campaign was somewhat assuaged by a letter from him which appeared in the *Portsmouth Herald* on March 9th. In it Mayberry giddily expressed his joy that Congress had just forced on the Pentagon another tranche of 90 more F-35 jets.

"[M]ore than 50 local companies build various components" for the fabulously-expensive airborne WMD, which might actually prove useful if we're ever attacked by the Air Forces of the long-defunct Soviet Union. As things stand the F-35 only serves to inflate the U.S. defense budget, enrich the stockholders of the military-industrial complex, and impoverish the rest of us.

The plane's ingenious design inspired a Mike Dater cartoon, published June 4, 2010. It shows a fellow in an office pointing to an easel and saying to a CEO, "It's the perfect weapon, sir. It has 435 parts, each one made in a different Congressional District."

Judging from Mayberry's letter, he's already on the job. We just don't know yet which of the F-35's multitudinous contractors hired him.

Was it Lockheed Martin? Northrop Grumman? Pratt & Whitney? BAE? There are so many ...

The Mystery of the Wavy Ropes

Two news stories published a month apart suggest that push may finally have come to shove between Maine's Department of Transportation [MDOT] and Cianbro, the company building the new Sarah Mildred Long bridge.

In a February 8th story MDOT said the bridge—originally scheduled to open six months ago—would not open until May. On March 9th, the *Portsmouth Herald* quoted DOT saying it was "mandating the contractor ... open the \$163 million bridge by the end of the month," *i.e.*,

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to page two

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from page one

before April.

DOT Project Manager Jeff Folsom was quoted saying the project was “looking much more positive than it did a week ago.” Beyond that, the sudden acceleration of the timeline was left unexplained.

That mystery is nothing, though, compared to the “wavy ropes,” first revealed in a March 7th story in the Award-Winning Local Daily.

The 40 cables that lift the span cost \$250,000 and should last 25 years. These are “wavy,” though, and will have to be replaced, perhaps within “several years.”

Why are they wavy? The AWLD apparently failed to ask. Two possible answers: bad manufacturing or bad installation. Lawyers and judges will likely choose.

—==—

Kiwis Nix Robinson Helicopters

With winter intermittently loosening its grip, little red Robinsons are being seen—and heard—more frequently, flying gawking tourists over downtown Portsmouth. Airborne Robinsons now will be a less-common sight in New Zealand, though. That country’s Department of Conservation “has

decided to permanently cease the use of Robinson helicopters to transport DOC employees.”

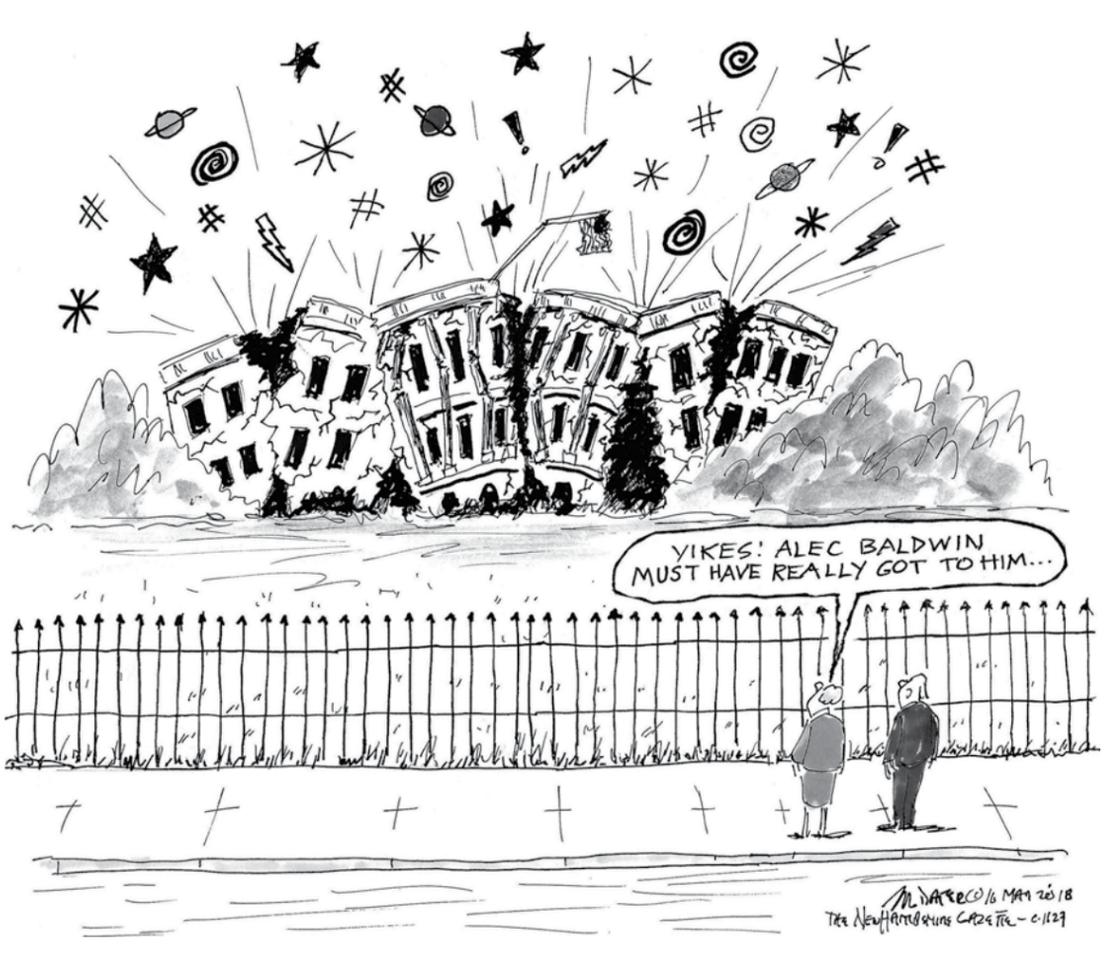
The new policy was announced February 28th in a statement from the agency’s Safety Director, Harry Maher. A temporary ban had been in place since November, 2016, in response to a high number of fatal accidents.

“Having assessed the evidence, we’ve made a decision to err on the side of caution and permanently cease the use of Robinson helicopters to transport DOC employees,” Maher said.

“Ensuring employee safety in Robinson helicopters relies heavily on pilots flying within strict operating limits at all times. We aren’t confident that we can rely on this consistently over time across the many varied conditions that DOC employees face when in helicopters.”

Radio New Zealand reported on March 6th that while Robinsons account for less than one-third [32 percent] of the country’s total helicopter flight time between 2000 and 2017, the brand was responsible for nearly half [48 percent] of all helicopter crashes during that period resulting in fatalities.

Robinson Helicopter Company sent a spokesperson, Bob Muse, to



New Zealand last year. At a public meeting, he appeared to be blaming pilots for the high number of accidents. On a recording made by New Zealand Radio, he said, “Because of this practice that was going on—flying the aircraft outside of its design limitation—we believe that New Zealand pilots became de-sensitized to the hazard of low-G pushover maneuvers. That’s our belief.”

New Zealander Louisa Patterson begged to differ. She founded and still runs a helicopter tourism company which once owned more than 40 Robinson helicopters. She sold them all off after her son and a pilot died in a Robinson R44 crash in February 2015.

“Since James’ and Steve’s accident,” she told Muse, “there’s been 118 R44 [crashes] around the world, resulting in 65 fatalities, and 44 of them are still unexplained in-

flight breakups. And that’s not New Zealand. That is America, Russia, the Czech Republic, Poland, South Africa ...”

At this juncture, according to Radio New Zealand’s presenter, “The meeting became very heated, and the media were asked to leave.”

Meanwhile, in South Africa ...

Also on February 28th, two people were killed when a Robinson crashed in the province of Mpumalanga, South Africa, east of Johannesburg.

“It seems they just took off, flew 1km, and something went wrong with the chopper’s tail piece,” an emergency worker told *News24.com*. “It went out of control and then it crashed.”

The tail of the R44 was found about 500 feet from the main wreckage—a classic sign of mast bumping.

... And on the East River

A Eurocopter crashed in the East River Sunday; the pilot escaped, but five passengers drowned.

FAA regulations require single-engine helicopters used in commercial air tours over water beyond the shoreline to be “equipped with fixed floats or an inflatable flotation system adequate to accomplish a safe emergency ditching.”

The Eurocopter that crashed Sunday was equipped with external inflatable floating devices, but, despite landing right-side up, it quickly capsized. A reader emailed us, suggesting one reason why this might have happened:

“Helicopters are really top-heavy. The body of the machine is very light, and when it is flying it hangs from the engine and rotor. So when one of these hits the water, the first thing it does is flip over.



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“It must be very disorienting, because suddenly you’re upside-down, in the water, and in the dark (and you were just in a plane crash). The pilots from the Coast Guard, &c., actually practice this, and I imagine the pilot was expecting it. They are trained to look for the air bubbles to figure out which way is ‘up.’”

Good News for the Fed Up

Are you fed up with systemic racism, poverty, the war economy, ecological devastation, and the nation’s distorted morality?

You may want to look into the New Hampshire Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival. It shouldn’t be too hard—a meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 22nd, at the McConnell Center in Dover, which

is located at 61 Locust Street. The doors will open at 6:00 p.m.; the event will run until 8:30 p.m.

Seacoast N.H. organizers and activists who are working to promote racial, social and economic justice and environmental sustainability in our state will explore with those attending how to build greater connections and join our energy and labor to create a powerful and growing national movement.

Their aim is to consider how movements, activism, and organizations can work in partnership with each other to increase collective power for transformation of our economy, our environment, our communities and our policy-making. All are welcome. Light supper and child care will be provided. For more information, see: [facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/NewHampshirePPC/)



“STILL DANCIN’ WITH THE GAL WHO BRUNG HIM”



Rarely is the question asked, “Why are the Flag Police so relentless in their pursuit of more widespread and rigorous adherence to the provisions of the Flag Code?” This screenshot may help to answer that question, should it ever arise. Taken from a YouTube video created on March 3rd, it shows a man wearing a red “Make America Great Again” [sic] hat standing with an American flag draped over his shoulders—a blatant and egregious violation of 4 USC Sec. 8, paragraph (d): “The flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. . . .” Moments earlier, he had been shouting at the proprietors of Revolution Books in Berkeley, Calif., “Trump is gonna get rid of all you f___ing pieces of shit. You know that? F___ all you anti-American pieces of shit.” The man, identified by Berkeley.com as Sacramento resident Rob Cantrell, went on to threaten, “F___ing commie scum. You’re commie scum. We’re gonna burn down your book store, you know that?” So-called “slippery slope” arguments are not necessarily valid in all cases, and correlation does not imply causation. The Flag Police, however, are firmly of the opinion that disrespect for the Flag Code may result from a failure to understand the Constitution.

NewHampshirePPC/

To: Readers; Re: the Bleepin’ Weather

As resolute natives of this region, we don’t believe in complaining about the weather *per se*—not even a trio of nor’easters in just 12 days. We find weather like this not just awe-inspiring, but entertaining, too. If we couldn’t take it, we’d have long ago beat feet.

The disruption to our schedule, though, does begin to wear. The March 2nd storm forced us to postpone the mailing of our last issue by a couple of days. The next one caused us to cancel our fortnightly staff meeting—and miss a fine meal at Bubby’s. Now, as we write this, a third one is in the making. If the corporation formerly known as “Public Service” can keep the lights on, we’ll be all right. If the juice goes out, though, we will have had the biscuit (to borrow a locution from our late friend and staunch supporter Gene Long). Whatever happens, rest assured, we’ll be doing our best to provide timely service. If this paper does arrive late, we invite the reader

to put the blame on our now-chronically-catastrophic weather.

For our part, we blame that weather on the fossil fuel industry. It knew full well, decades ago, the effects it was having on the climate. Yet it hid those findings so as not to interrupt the obscene profits its shareholders were reaping, even as its products were wreaking havoc.

If any climate-change deniers actually read this diatribe, they’re likely to be “triggered,” as the kids say these days, by our blatant assault on an industry towards which they seem curiously protective, considering its disdain for their lives and well-being.

In response they may remind us that noteworthy weather is not uncommon in these parts, at this time of year. For example, this week marks the 25th anniversary of the Blizzard of 1993, and the 130th anniversary of the Great Blizzard of 1888. We would remind them that those events were separated by decades, not days.

We are heartened to see that ex-Governor Arnold Schwarzeneg-

ger is talking with law firms about suing oil companies for “knowingly killing people all over the world.”

Put Yo’ Hands Upon the Radio

In what will likely prove to have been an ill-advised moment, a person affiliated with WSCA-LP invited this newspaper to expand its reach beyond tangible but silent newsprint, and on into the ætherial but audible realm of the licensed FM broadcast spectrum. Ever susceptible to flattery, we agreed too quickly to allow for reconsideration.

In keeping with our baseline aversion to any superfluous effort, we hatched a scheme to simply read the daily entries of Admiral Fowle’s Piscataqua River Tidal Guide. So, for the nonce, every weekday, beginning Monday, just before Amy Goodman’s “Democracy Now” airs at 5:00 p.m., listeners to that station—it’s at 106.1 on the FM dial, but you knew that—will be subjected, for three or four minutes, to the dyspeptic wheezings and croakings of Admiral Fowle himself.

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To the Good Guys with Guns:

In today's gun culture, it seems like personal protection has evolved into a hobby, much like riding motorcycles or learning to fly an airplane. In addition to a wide range of readily available firearms, there are stacks of magazines, how-to books, competitive events, training courses, specialized products, and even political identities to be consumed. Clearly, a lot of money is changing hands.

If you elect to become a good guy with a gun, you'll no doubt learn to be more vigilant out in public than the other people around you, and you'll rehearse various life-threatening scenarios. Practice is important because mishandling a confrontation could inflict serious collateral damage or get you killed.

Sleuthing to spot imaginary bad guys is bound to be emotionally stimulating and fun, but it can exact a psychological toll if you allow it. If the Gulf War taught us anything, we've learned how sustained hypervigilance and preoccupation with unseen threats can undermine personal wellbeing, resulting in behavior changes and even PTSD. Whether we do it for fun or out of necessity, hypervigilance really does change our mental default settings and permanently rewire how we perceive the world around us. Ask any police officer.

These days, there's a serious added risk imposed by the abundance of conspiracy-laced propaganda from alt-right media. It doesn't matter if the source is the NRA, hate radio, white supremacy groups, or Russia's social-media attack on America's national unity. By definition, "good guys" on the hunt need "bad guys" to pursue, and if there's any shortage of bad guys, the alt-right is ready, willing, and able to invent new ones for us.

So, be a good guy with a gun if you must. But if you find yourself checking under the bed before turning off the light, or fantasizing a romantic evening with Dana Loesch, please stay out of my neighborhood!

Thank you.
Rick Littlefield
Barrington, N.H.

Rick:
We regret to inform you that the Founding Fathers, in all their paternalistic wisdom as decoded by Saint Antonin and others of his ilk, determined 230 years ago this June that you have no Constitutional right to live free of unorganized, self-proclaimed members of a non-existent militia, armed with more firepower than an entire Revolutionary War regiment.

The Editor

Democrats to Blame for Parkland

To the Editor:

Democrat [sic] policies aren't usually as visibly horrifying as the Parkland massacre that left 17 dead. Nevertheless, millions of people are victimized because Democrats are weak on enforcing laws against criminals who prey on law-abiding Americans.

Proper law enforcement in Parkland would have resulted in Cruz being arrested and punished or treated; in either case he wouldn't have been able to legally buy a gun.

But Parkland implemented President Obama's Promise Program to reduce minority student arrests. It doesn't take a genius to know that student criminals would commit more and more severe crimes when they learned that they wouldn't be arrested.

Eventually student criminals leave school without learning that crime doesn't pay. And without criminal records these student criminals, like Nikolas Cruz, can legally buy guns to further victimize people.

Cruz was a very sick teenager, and his posts, comments, and actions cried out for attention which wasn't provided; apparently school administrators and law enforcement were more interested in faking student crime statistics to enhance their personal reputations and qualify for an additional \$54 million in funding.

Democrat [sic] policies, like the Promise Program, often result in more victims. Most murders occur in only a few neighborhoods in American cities controlled by Democrat [sic] politicians who refuse to provide the needed law enforcement. Democrat [sic] politicians protect illegal aliens



and fight to legalize them; Democrats even shut down the government for them, despite the fact that (mostly young) illegal aliens kill 400-500 and victimize hundreds of thousands more Americans annually.

Illegal drugs kill about 40,000 Americans annually, yet President Obama released thousands of convicted drug criminals from prison early and allowed tens of thousands of deportable illegal aliens convicted of selling drugs and/or other violent crimes to remain in our country.

Democrats talk about strict penalties for gun crimes, yet President Obama prosecuted fewer than 50 of the 100,000 people annually that he claimed tried to illegally purchase guns. Punishments for straw purchasers (people who buy guns for people who are prohibited from having guns (e.g., felons, drug addicts, mentally ill, domestic abusers) vary widely, although their purchases (felonies) may help criminals victimize other people.

Proper law enforcement would have avoided the Parkland massacre and many of America's other violent crimes. Having trained, armed protection in our schools could prevent or minimize the losses in school shootings, but Democrats oppose protecting our schools.

Stopping and punishing criminals doesn't seem to be a Democrat [sic] priority. Democrat [sic] gun control proposals wouldn't stop criminals; they'd only make law abiding people more defenseless and more victimized.

Don Ewing
Meredith, N.H.

Don:

Having wasted precious though hilariously-underpaid hours of our editorial life Googling documented refutations of innumerable ludicrous claims you have made, this fortnight we'll just settle for reminding readers that your alleged facts are often specious.

After we subtract the sanctimony, your

argument boils down to this: members of the Democratic Party are the evil minions of Satan who were put here on Earth to torture good, God-fearing people [read: Trump-supporting Republicans], before sending them to an early grave.

We do not know David Despers' politics. We do know that he turned himself in to Chester County, Pa. police on Monday morning, to face a third-degree murder charge. Police say Desper, a white 28-year old male, shot Bianca Roberson, a black 18-year old girl who had just graduated high school and was headed for college, in an incident described as road rage.

Police seized a .40 caliber Smith & Wesson pistol from Desper. He had purchased it legally, and had a permit to carry it, making him a "good guy" right up until the time of Roberson's death.

The Editor

We All Have Standing to Fight Emoluments

To the Editor:

Ever since Trump became president, there's been lots of talk about his violation of the "emoluments clause"—prohibiting his taking of gifts and/or making a profit from foreign entities. Several suits have been launched against him ... mostly by other hotel owners who claim that they're losing business because rich foreigners want to stay in Trump's hotel to curry favor with the government. The losses they claim are the "damages" which give them "standing" to file the suits. These efforts have so far been unsuccessful ... with particular problems having to do with the "standing" issue.

But, there is another emoluments clause in the Constitution—sometimes referred to as "domestic emoluments." It's in Article II, Section 1. It reads: "7: The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the

Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them." (my italics)

The foreign emoluments are (to my mind) just more money laundering and/or the usual sorts of ingratiating gifts exchanged by mob bosses everywhere. As such, I hope Mueller brings them to light.

The domestic emoluments bother me much more. It bothers me, for instance, that he charges rent at his properties to house all the free security provided to him—even charging them for the use of golf carts! And, apparently, he charges them full rate! I.e., he clearly makes a profit ... which is the essence of an "emolument."

Any group of taxpayers (it seems to me) has standing in objecting to these emoluments. The government provides Trump with a perfectly nice vacation place ... at *much* less expense. He chooses, instead, to go to his places. *All* the extra money that's being spent, that's going directly into Donald Trump's pocket—emoluments from the United States—is coming directly out of the pockets of taxpayers. Though the individual taxpayer might only take a small hit from Trump's domestic profiteering, he's still suffering direct damage. Shouldn't this provide legal standing for a lawsuit? Shouldn't it be grounds for impeachment?

I hope someone with the right legal expertise will pick up this ball and run with it!

Paul Fischler
Rochester, N.H.

Paul:

You nailed it. The issue of "standing" has too often been used to erect a barrier between the citizenry and justice.

The Editor

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Murph's Fortnightly Quote

"The greatest evil which fortune can inflict on men is to endow them with small talents and great ambition."

— Luc de Clapiers, Marquis de Vauvenargues (1715-1747) from *Reflections and Maxims* (1746)

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Do Born Lives Matter?

To the Editor:
 Re: The ongoing gun violence in schools:
 Where is the Right to Life Community?
 Why haven't they rallied against gun violence?
 After all, it is our children who are being slaughtered.
 Nan Graves
 Cape Neddick, Me.
 Nan:
Yes, but the children being slaughtered made the choice to leave the womb.
 The Editor

Misconceptions Malign the Poor

To the Editor:
 Stigma runs deep when it comes to government programs to help the poor. President Trump has no problem limiting access to food stamps and housing benefits. He views welfare for the lazy and primarily for Blacks (untrue), while ignoring major declines in assistance over the last two decades and soaring poverty. Popular misconceptions have proliferated about welfare that malign the victims of poverty. Myth: Welfare payments are too high. Take the Supplemental Nutrition Program, formerly known as food stamps. The average benefit per person is \$1.50 per meal. Imagine feeding yourself nutritionally on that! Most other government assistance programs provide only the barest minimum amount.
 Myth: Undocumented immigrants are big-time welfare grabbers. Fact is, they're not eligible for any benefits except emergency Medicaid (severely injured or sick). The majority pay taxes, including billions to Social Security tax benefits which they'll never receive.
 And they have zero access to welfare.
 Myth: Welfare takers are lazy and

deceptive. Actually, blue collar wages are so low that full-time employees are eligible for welfare, like Walmart workers, fast-food, home care and child-care workers. Almost \$104 million in food stamps were used at military commissaries in 2013. Most people on welfare are hard workers like you and me, or they're impoverished kids and elders or people with disabilities being helped to survive, not thrive. People aren't on public assistance because it's cushy, or because they're do-nothings. It's because more and more jobs are paying less and less, or are being eliminated due to automation, outsourcing, et al.

Mike Kulla
 Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
 Mike:
Let's not get even get started cataloging America's popular but erroneous beliefs. We'll be at it all fortnight—even if we exempt religion from our scrutiny.
One of our firmest and most cherished beliefs is that it's no coincidence so many of them blame "the poor" for their plight.
They make bad choices—from a menu on which there are few or no good ones.
They are lazy—though they work harder and are paid less than the idle rich.
They are stupid... well, maybe they are, if they don't organize to fight back against a system that's designed to crush them.
 The Editor

Right Wing Trolls & Allies Attack Students

To the Editor:
 Well, the right-wing trolls, the NRA, their Republican allies and Fox News are at it again: attacking high school students in Parkland, FL (and nationwide) for getting involved and demanding action on gun safety.
 It turns out the students at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School are too dumb to notice their fellow

students lying dead in the hallways, blood spattered on the walls. Nope, according to the right-wing Breitbart types, it's outside agitators like their favorite all-knowing, all-powerful Jewish boogeyman, George Soros, who duped the students into getting organized and demanding action on gun safety.

The students couldn't have organized the protests themselves because, as we all know, teenagers are not very savvy about social media. Yea, sure.

Michael Frandzel
 Portsmouth, N.H.

Let My People Sue the Gummint

Dear, Bob, Robert, Vincent, and Stephen—My State Representatives:
 [Constitutional Amendment Concurrent Resolution 15, providing that taxpayers have standing to bring actions against the government] is paramount in controlling, by the people, government, to the end that it is the citizen's right to have all avenues of equal protection in the courts and other areas.

The New Hampshire Supreme Court has preempted New Hampshire citizens' rights, and now only CACR 15 can rectify it permanently. The ability to first challenge the legality of the laws about to be made [which] the citizen believes are wrong and against fair and equal treatment must start in the courts and taxpayers must have standing or otherwise be suppressed in their redresses.

To have a court case precedent that denies an inalienable right to Redress is no different than when slaves were sent back to their masters under court case decisions and this could conceivable force to preclude the making of the 14th Amendment.

Those Court case decisions could not preempt new law because only you [Members of the General Court] have the power to clean up a wrong instituted from [sic] any individual from any

branch of government.

Alexander Hamilton describes the supremacy doctrine: If a number of political societies enter into a larger political society, the laws which the latter may enact, pursuant entrusted to it by its constitution, must necessarily be *supreme over those societies* and the *individuals* of whom they are composed. (Federalist 33, emphasis added.)

You have the sole power to override a court decision that is wrongful under our principles of government. The Courts are not the final arbitrator of good government, the people's representatives are.

It is all of our duty to protect those principles of good government that from time to time are failed by the courts or from other places or individuals.

Jeff Frost
 Alexandria, N.H.

Jeff:
Amazing—we finally agree on something. Probably for radically different reasons, but still...

The Editor

Egregious Dereliction of Duty

To the Editor:
 When a President of the United States takes the Oath of Office, he/she is making a promise to American citizens, that they, as Commander-in-Chief, "will to the best of their ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States," against all enemies, foreign or domestic. This compels me to ask that despite strong warnings from top officials in government (National Intelligence Chief Coates, CIA Chief Pompeo, NSA Chief Rogers and FBI Chief Wray, whom are all #45 appointees) and members of #45's own cabinet and national security team (Secretary of State Tillerson, Secretary of Defense Mattis and National Security Advisor McMaster) that Russia, beyond a reasonable doubt, interfered in the 2016 election and are certain to meddle in the upcoming 2018 elections, why are neither #45's administration nor the Congress taking any meaningful measures to address this grave matter?

In addition to their inaction towards the Russian threat to our democratic elections, why are #45 and the GOP members of Congress attacking and denigrating federal law enforcement and the intelligence community, the very agencies who are doing a great job, on the front line, of identifying and keeping us informed of the threat?

I'm willing to remain patient, and reserve judgement as to the reasons, until the special investigators, under former FBI Chief Robert Mueller, complete their investigation to receive the answers to my questions. I'm also confident that the results of their work will inform us of the exact reasons for #45, VP Pence and Speaker Ryan's inability or unwillingness to stand up to Putin's Russia. Meanwhile, Putin has already succeeded, more than he could have ever imagined, in shattering the public faith and trust in basic American beliefs and democratic institutions. He, furthermore, seems to be feeling quite emboldened, due to the lack of any punitive response from #45 and the GOP-led U.S. Congress, as we are being told almost daily that the Russians continue their successful disinformation campaign, creating further divides among the American citizenry.

What we are witnessing is an unprecedented dereliction of duty from those who've sworn to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution.

Wayne H. Merritt
 Dover, N.H.

Just What We Need

To the Editor:
 While the country still mourns the mass murder of 17 people at a Florida High School by a killer using an AR-15, the debate about the ability of civilians to freely purchase such weapons continues, with little hope of any meaningful change taking place. In the meantime, an Israeli company Gilboa is about to start full production of their Snake double-barrel AR-15 for U.S. civilian availability.

The civilian version of this double

Hate Mail, &c.

to page six

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NEW-HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE

The Northcountry Chronicle

Vestiges

by William Marvel

My generation learned American history as a succession of armed conflicts, each of which was preceded by the denouement of the last war and the escalation toward the next one. That habit of wrapping different epochs around their wars may account for the great attention sometimes paid by media and certain demographics to the last survivors of each conflict, whose death always seems to slam a heavy door on an entire age.

In the Sagamore section of Portsmouth's South Street Cemetery lies the grave of William R. Seddon. When I was too young to remember much about it, he was an old man living across Dixon Avenue from us in Eliot, Me., and he spent a lot of time in his barn, pounding on things. He had once been a carpenter, and perhaps a blacksmith, because much of the pounding involved an anvil. He was the only Spanish-American War veteran I ever knew, and I always regretted not being old enough

to think of asking him about it.

My father was luckier in that regard. Around the age of eight or nine, he sat on the porch of a Cape Cod barbershop listening to Union veterans recount their tales of the Civil War. At nearly the same age, I heard the radio report about the death of Albert Woolson, the last Union veteran. That may have been my first lesson in finality, for in my still-muddled perception of time I had entertained a fantasy of someday meeting an old man who had served in Lincoln's armies, just as my father had. The radio told me that was never going to happen.

It seemed an enormous watershed, as though an entire tumultuous epoch had been swept from memory to memoir. While I couldn't articulate it then, the demise of the last witness to those legendary events undermined my confidence in the history of the period. With no one left harboring first-hand recollections of those epic times (I wondered), who could gauge the accuracy of our modern interpreta-

tions? That was before I came to understand how easily human memory can be manipulated by internal and external influences, but that early skepticism may have helped spawn my perennial quest for original historical sources.

During the 1950s and 1960s there were still quite a few veterans of World War I in Conway. They were the grandfathers who were just then retiring, and I knew several of them. Jack McDonald, who had come to the U.S. from Canada as a runaway teenager, lived at the head of Conway Lake. He once showed me a 1918 picture of himself standing in uniform between two other soldiers, with his arms folded awkwardly across his chest; he said he was hiding a bottle of whiskey behind his sleeves. Jack, who very much enjoyed a drink, was known as the mayor of Center Conway for having once (or more often) decked himself out in top hat and tails to stand in the middle of the road and direct traffic, when any came by. He was a little more restrained by the

time I knew him.

Fred Pickering had been his company's cook in France in 1918. He had little money, and all one summer in the early 1960s he lived contentedly in an old one-room camp on what was then the unmaintained portion of Davis Hill Road, drawing water from a nearby seasonal stream. What's left of the camp sits in the woods behind my house now. I don't know where Fred is, except that he's not above ground, because the last Doughboy died seven years ago this month, ignored by most Americans born after 1950. For those of us who noticed it, that landmark obituary inspired some thought on the cataclysm of 1914, and on the entangling alliances that ignited it.

Now the veterans of World War II are engaged in a race to be the last of their cohort. They were the ubiquitous adults against whom we rebelled as teenagers, and to whom we later turned for advice or emergency loans after repeating the same mistakes they had made. Fewer than half a million American veterans of

that war remain, and hundreds of them are going to their reward each day. For those of us who grew up before Woodstock, the death of the last World War II veteran will be difficult to ignore. As the last vestige of the generation that made and maintained the world in which we floundered or flourished, that loss will mark the final milestone before the inexorably advancing shadow overtakes our own footsteps.

We may, however, have found a way to avoid the societal effects of burying the last surviving veteran of some forgotten conflict—forgotten, that is, by all but the children of those who waged it. Regardless of their wild policy disagreements, all three presidents of the third millennium have seemed determined to maintain a state of perpetual war, à la 1984, regardless of economic or societal costs. That might preclude there ever being a "last" veteran, and thus prevent even a portion of the people from lapsing into reflection on the wisdom of their course.

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from page five

trigger-reconfigured weapon avoids the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) definition of the banned machine gun, a firearm that fires multiple rounds with a single trigger pull. However, it will still allow for multiple bullets to be fired at the same time, or in rabid bursts known as salvo fire, using its double trigger system. (*Americangg.net*)

In the absence of any new legislation, this weapon may soon be available for individuals to buy here in America. It is disgraceful enough that we still allow the sale of the standard AR-15, and other semi-automatic assault style weapons, but to allow this even more deadly version to be available to almost anyone is criminal.



Trump, the NRA and many politicians are focusing on mental health issues as the cause of our gun violence epidemic. However, allowing weapons such as the Gilboa Snake to be available for civilians demonstrates the real mental health problem with gun violence: an NRA, gun manufacturers and politicians who refuse to see the real cause of the problem—pathological greed, denial, dereliction of duty and too many guns in the hands of too many violent people. That we would allow weapons of mass murder such as the Snake AR-15 and its cousins to be sold to the public is the true defini-

tion of insanity. Those who would allow such weapons to be in the hands of civilians, including those who currently have or will develop mental illness, need to evaluate their own mental health status.

Rich DiPentima, LTC, USAF, Ret. Portsmouth, N.H.

Rich:

Performing our due diligence, we used The Google to rule out the possibility that the Gilboa Snake was a hoax intended to ensnare editors who suffer from insufficient skepticism.

Lo and behold, the damn thing is real. It's also ungainly, preposterous,

and, we have no doubt, hideously expensive.

We wouldn't waste gun safe space on a Gilboa Snake. That said, there are bound to be well-heeled gun nuts out there who can't wait to buy one.

The Editor

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Slavery to Guns

To the Editor:

Rural white Americans are frantically closing ranks, whipping each other into a fervor and consulting with their lobbyist and industry overlords on how to push back against the coming tide of overdue gun control. The "Us vs. Them" nar-

rative chicanery, along with the zeal in which it is delivered, reminds me of the last time the Federal government told such a large group of citizens it could no longer have something it so desperately wanted: slaves.

Just like their racist ancestors, modern day residents of out of touch fly-over states, hopped up on opioids and Fox News, can't imagine a world without their precious guns, fearful that they will lose the little power that they have. Attempting to beat the Feds at their own game, the NRA—our modern day King Cotton—is hard at work, attempting to circumvent public discourse by galvanizing their members and shepherding ready-made legislation through all levels of government,

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Hard times (still) in the fields

by Jim Hightower

Every decade or so, America's mass media are surprised to discover that migrant farmworkers are still being miserably paid and despicably treated by the industry that profits from their labor. Stories run, the public is outraged (again), assorted officials pledge action, then—nothing changes.

Several news reports recently have re-documented that the shame-

ful abuse of these hard-working, hard-traveling families continues. A Los Angeles Times report revealed that, even if they receive the legal minimum wage, many farm laborers earn less than \$17,500 a year because of the low pay and the seasonal nature of their work. Moreover, they are often "housed" in shacks, old chicken coops, shipping containers, and squalid motels.

This year, though, multibillion-dollar agribusiness interests

from Florida to California are uniting in a push for new assistance—not for workers, but themselves! While they backed Trump for president, many are now expressing shock that he may actually try to fulfill his campaign promise to cut off the flow of undocumented immigrants to their fields. They now admit that these immigrants make up as much as 70 percent of the industry's workforce, so they've rushed to Washington, demanding a special

exemption from their president's planned lockout of Mexican laborers. In the process, they've suddenly recharacterized the very migrants they've been so callously mistreating as noble employees who're essential to the USA's food security.

BigAg deserves no special break at all, but if Trump and Congress give any help to them, they should be required to pay a living wage, provide decent family housing and health care, and treat all farmwork-

ers with the respect due to people who really are essential to our food security. To help push for basic human justice, connect with the United Farm Workers at: ufw.org.

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.

hoping to bury gun ownership privilege so deeply in the law, it will be almost impossible to extricate.

Nonetheless, America's demographics are changing, and the desire to form a more perfect union, ensure domestic tranquility and promote the general welfare will eventually overcome the morose and self-centered desire of a few to horde military style, semi-automatic rifles. While wounded veterans, humble sportsmen and super models are often trotted out as the face of gun rights, anyone who's ever been on the internet knows the most vicious supporters of the NRA and its uncompromising agenda are those who fear that without their guns, they won't be able to fight back against the "inevitable" martial law of the "globalists." Slave owners in the antebellum south feared the same thing. They too had guns. How did that work out for them?

Michael Polk
Lebanon, Me.

Protect People & Planet Over Profit

To the Editor:

Now is the time to unite both community and bi-partisanship solidarity and action to recognize our right to self-government.

Sharing these sentiments is Ellen Read, New Hampshire Representative for Rockingham District 17 and the proposer of CACR19, which goes to floor debate this coming week: "I truly hope my colleagues

join me in supporting the Community Rights Amendment because it means doing exactly what we came to Concord to do—protect the people and ecosystems of New Hampshire. This Amendment places the power back into the hands of the governed, the very thing our Revolutionary ancestors fought for."

What the Revolutionaries of this country fought for was not something they could buy. It was the right to pursue a self-determined life of honesty and goodness. For our legislators to deny us an enlightened path to access this self-determination is for them to admit doubt in their constituents' ability to reason over and to trust in the goodness that is in ourselves and in the ecosystems around us. CACR19 will secure our right to protect this goodness for a new future honoring people's and nature's natural right to sustainability.

The New Hampshire Community Rights Network (NHCRN) supports Representative Read's call to amend the state Constitution to recognize the right of local community self-government.

NHCRN is a non-profit, grassroots organization that seeks to empower communities and elected officials with education and author-

ity about our individual and collective right of local self-governance in order to secure and protect the inherent and unalienable rights of all inhabitants of New Hampshire to economic, social, and environmental justice.

Learn how you can support people, places, and principle over profit by contacting info@nhcommunityrights.org or visiting www.nhcommunityrights.org.

Douglas Darrell
Center Barnstead, NH

Point of Order!

To the Editor:

I am concerned by the underhanded treatment NH Community Rights Amendment, CACR19, received during its Feb. 27th House Municipal & County Government executive session.

CACR19 moved through subcommittee work sessions resulting in a 3-2 bi-partisan vote recommending that it ought-to-pass. The next step was CACR19's executive session where protocol would have the full House Municipal & Government committee chair open by calling the subcommittee chair to report to the full committee the outcome and reasoning behind this

ought-to-pass recommendation.

Not only was this protocol not followed at the Feb. 27th executive session, but the senior Republican chair of the full committee ignored the first hand that went up. It belonged to a CACR19-supporting Republican subcommittee member seeking to motion that CACR19 ought-to-pass as recommended.

The full committee chair looked at him, looked away, and instead called on the subcommittee chair—a fellow senior Republican voting against CACR19, who not only neglected reporting the ought-to-pass subcommittee recommendation vote but also immediately motioned that CACR19 be inexpedient-to-legislate.

This subcommittee chair should have reported on and motioned that CACR19 ought-to-pass, so that it could be seconded and voted on by the full committee. If it did not garner majority support as such, then it could have been motioned inexpedient-to-legislate, seconded, and voted on accordingly.

Point of order was called to have the inappropriate inexpedient-to-legislate motion withdrawn, but to no effect. This prompted additional protest from six bi-partisan committee members—one of whom

is registering formal objection, all of whom decreased their time to actually discuss CACR19.

Meanwhile, representatives opposing CACR19 ignored the amendment's language, which clearly states local laws protected under the amendment would go through town majority vote procedures and would not limit but expand citizen rights. They hyperbolically characterized the amendment as a harbinger of anarchy and chaos.

The only approach to anarchy I see associated with CACR19 is that of senior committee members believing their opinions supersede the process deserved by each piece of legislation that comes before them.

Ultimately, the vote tallied 11 to 8 in favor of recommending to the full New Hampshire House that CACR19 be inexpedient-to-legislate (one absent Representative supporting CACR19 would have made it 11 to 9).

Sometime next month, CACR19 heads to the New Hampshire House floor and anticipated heated debate to overturn the committee recommendation of inexpedient-to-legislate.

I urge NH voters to visit www.nhcommunityrights.org to learn more about CACR19 and to call their Representatives to ask them to support the amendment.

Monica Christofili
Newmarket, NH



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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.

SUNDAY, MARCH 18	MONDAY, MARCH 19	TUESDAY, MARCH 20	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21	THURSDAY, MARCH 22	FRIDAY, MARCH 23	SATURDAY, MARCH 24
<p>2004—At Gilley's, Portsmouth narcs and off-duty cops hold round two of a fight begun at Paddy's on St. Pat's Day.</p> <p>2003—"Why should we hear about body bags and death and how many?" asks Barbara Bush. "It's not relevant... why should I waste my beautiful mind on something like that?"</p> <p>1990—Fake cops bluff guards and steal Rembrandts and a Vermeer from Boston's Gardner Museum.</p> <p>1969—The U.S. begins secretly bombing Cambodia.</p> <p>1967—Thanks to inadequate charts, outdated radar, and bad judgment, the <i>Torrey Canyon</i> hits a reef off Cornwall. About 30 million gallons of oil foul the English Channel.</p> <p>1965—Alexey Arkhipovich Leonov takes the first walk in space. It's almost his last. To fit back in the capsule he must bleed air from his suit.</p> <p>1963—The Supreme Court rules that states must provide lawyers for indigent defendants.</p> <p>1953—The State Dept. orders its overseas libraries cleansed of books by authors of "suspect" loyalty.</p> <p>1937—A school in oil-rich New London, Texas, heated by un-scented waste gas to save money, explodes. More than 300 die, mostly students.</p> <p>1925—A tornado kills 695 along a 235-mile path from Mo. to Ind.</p> <p>1741—Fort George, the center of colonial government in New York, is trashed as part of a conspiracy among blacks and poor whites.</p>	<p>2011—The U.S. and France attack Libya—for its own good, of course.</p> <p>2004—<i>USA Today</i> admits that its Pulitzer-contender Jack Kelley ought to have competed in the fiction category.</p> <p>2003—George W.[MD] Bush starts a pre-emptive war with 40 Tomahawk missiles in a residential Baghdad neighborhood. Civilians die.</p> <p>2002—Scientists report "alarming" melting of the Larsen Ice Shelf.</p> <p>2002—The Pentagon's top Cuba expert admits she spied for Cuba.</p> <p>1987—Ed "Meese is a Pig" Meese endorses drug testing for schoolteachers.</p> <p>1983—On "Diff'rent Strokes," Nancy Reagan tells "a true story" about "Charlie." "Burned out on marijuana" at 14, he "brutally beats" Sis when she won't steal to buy him weed.</p> <p>1954—The U.S. government burns books by Wilhelm Reich.</p> <p>1945—Off Japan, Kamikaze attacks kill 800 sailors on the <i>U.S.S. Franklin</i>.</p> <p>1937—Clarence "Frogman" Henry is born in New Orleans.</p> <p>1935—Over 100 are injured in a Harlem riot. A study blames police brutality; Mayor LaGuardia suppresses it.</p> <p>1916—Eight U.S. Army biplanes go after Pancho Villa.</p> <p>1840—Sixty-five Comanche men, women, and children, attend a San Antonio peace conference; 35 are killed by Anglos, and 30 imprisoned.</p> <p>1687—French explorer Robert de La Salle is murdered in Texas by mutineers fed up with his haughty ways.</p>	<p>2017—FBI Director James Comey tells Congress the Bureau is investigating possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia.</p> <p>2003—U.S. ground troops invade Iraq to protect The Homeland from Saddam's innumerable weapons of mass destruction.</p> <p>1992—UN weapons inspector Rolf Ekeus says Iraq has agreed to destroy its weapons of mass destruction.</p> <p>1976—Press Baron William R. Hearst's granddaughter Patricia is convicted of bank robbery.</p> <p>1954—"If the [Vietnamese] Communists continue to suffer the losses they have been taking," says French Chief of Staff Gen. Paul Ely, "I don't know how they can stay in the battle."</p> <p>1933—Germany opens its first concentration camp at Dachau.</p> <p>1933—"Get to hell out of here, you son of a bitch," would-be FDR assassin Giuseppe Zangara tells the chaplain before he's zapped for killing Chicago's mayor. "All capitalists lousy bunch of crooks. Goodbye to all poor peoples everywhere! Push the button!"</p> <p>1905—An old boiler explodes at the Grover Shoe Factory in Brockton, Mass. and shoots through the roof. The building collapses, trapping hundreds of workers; naphtha barrels burn; 58 die and 150 are injured.</p> <p>1899—Martha Place strikes a blow for gender equality by being executed in New York's electric chair, the first woman to do so.</p>	<p>2013—Four people perish in a fiery inferno after a Robinson R44 helicopter crashes in New South Wales.</p> <p>2003—Richard Clarke, senior U.S. counter-intelligence officer since G.H.[H.]W. Bush, says G.W.[MD] Bush ignored al Qaeda until 9/11.</p> <p>1995—Mississippi ratifies the 13th amendment outlawing slavery. Failure to register nullifies the action, though.</p> <p>1981—In Mobile, Ala., two Kluxers conduct the last recorded lynching. RIP: Michael Donald, 19.</p> <p>1963—"Gents, this is an educational project," says condemned murderer Frederick Wood in New York. "You are about to witness the damaging effect electricity has on Wood."</p> <p>1960—South African police kill 89 unarmed black protesters in the Sharpeville Massacre.</p> <p>1952—DJ Alan Freed throws the Moondog Coronation Ball in Cleveland—the first rock concert.</p> <p>1947—The GOP's Red Scare running rampant, Truman orders a "loyalty screening" in political self-defense.</p> <p>1937—Police in Ponce, P.R., executing orders from the Governor, machine gun peaceful, marching protestors; 21 die, 235 are wounded.</p> <p>1925—Tennessee bans the teaching of evolution in public schools.</p> <p>1915—At a White House screening, Woodrow Wilson is enraptured by the racist masterpiece <i>Birth of a Nation</i>.</p> <p>1861—Slavery's the cornerstone of the Confederacy, says Veep A. Stephens.</p>	<p>2015—A Robinson R44 helicopter crashes in Orlando, Fla., killing three occupants. The house it hits is set ablaze. Fortunately it's unoccupied.</p> <p>2006—<i>MV Queen of the North</i>, a Canadian ferry four miles off course, hits an island at 17 knots and sinks with a loss of two lives. Union reps deny crewmembers were having sex at the time.</p> <p>2003—The chief officer of <i>RMS Milbeim</i>, getting out of his chair while on watch, catches his trousers on a lever, falls and hits his head, losing consciousness. The ship runs aground at Land's End in Cornwall, a total loss.</p> <p>1987—The <i>Mobro 4000</i>, a barge toting 3,168 tons of garbage, leaves NYC. 162 days and 6,000 miles later it returns to be incinerated.</p> <p>1986—A Robinson R22 helicopter dismantles itself near Memphis, Tenn., killing its experienced pilot and a luckless passenger.</p> <p>1986—The U.S. executes its first Vietnam vet in Fla.'s electric chair: David Funchess, a black former Marine with a Purple Heart and PTSD.</p> <p>1975—A technician looking for air leaks with a lighted candle starts a fire causing \$100 million in damages at the Brown's Ferry nuclear power plant in Alabama.</p> <p>1966—An Undersecretary of Defense warns his boss bombing North Vietnam is useless.</p> <p>1622—Powhatans slaughter 400 English settlers—about one-third of the population of Virginia.</p>	<p>2004—A bipartisan group of 19 Members of Congress gathers in a Senate office building to watch a golden crown being placed on the head of convicted tax cheat and <i>Washington Times</i> owner Rev. Sun Myung Moon.</p> <p>2003—A convoy of the 507th Maintenance Co. gets lost, then ambushed near Nasiriyah, Iraq; 11 soldiers are KIA, five are wounded, and six taken prisoner, including Pvt. Jessica Ryan.</p> <p>2003—A U.S. missile downs a British fighter jet over Iraq.</p> <p>1983—Acting president Ronald Reagan proposes a space-based anti-missile system similar to one portrayed in the 1940 film <i>Murder in the Air</i>, in which he played Lt. "Brass" Bancroft.</p> <p>1965—In orbit, astronaut John Young, deadpan, offers Virgil "Gus" Grissom a contraband corned beef sandwich.</p> <p>1918—In London, a bullet-catching trick by American illusionist William Robinson (aka "Chung Ling Soo, the Marvelous Chinese Conjuror") goes fatally awry.</p> <p>1901—U.S. troops capture Filipino rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo, whom the U.S. had earlier backed in his fight against Spanish colonial powers.</p> <p>1877—Mormon leader John D. Lee is executed by a firing squad for his role in the Mountain Meadows Massacre. He leaves 19 wives and 56 children.</p> <p>1842—The House of Representatives censures Congressman Joshua R. Giddings [W-Ohio] for introducing a resolution opposing slavery.</p>	<p>2016—Microsoft's AI Twitterbot Tay is taken offline after 16 hours; its tweets are too racist and pro-fascist.</p> <p>2004—At a black-tie dinner, President George W.[MD] Bush cracks up A-list broadcast journalists with gags about "his" failed search for WMDs. Less amused: families of dead GI's, of which there are 691 at this point.</p> <p>1989—Exxon demonstrates its commitment to the environment in Prince William Sound via the <i>Exxon Valdez</i>.</p> <p>1975—British bricklayer Alex Mitchell laughs himself to death as he watches BBC's "The Goodies."</p> <p>1971—The <i>Washington Post</i> reports stolen FBI documents show mailmen, a Swarthmore switchboard operator, and a local police chief have been spying on Philadelphia activists.</p> <p>1971—Operation Lam Son 719, the ARVN invasion of Laos, ends. Casualties: huge; winners: none.</p> <p>1944—At Stalag Luft III, 76 POWs escape through "Tunnel Harry." Three are successful, the rest re-captured, 50 of whom are shot.</p> <p>1944—His parachute defunct, RAF tailgunner Nicholas Alkemade jumps from his crippled bomber 18,000 feet over Germany. Pine trees and snow break his fall; he lives until 1987.</p> <p>1898—Robert Allison becomes the first American to buy an American-built automobile. It's a Winton.</p> <p>1834—The Bank of Maryland, a "stupendous fraud," collapses; depositors lose between \$2 and \$3 million.</p>
SUNDAY, MARCH 25	MONDAY, MARCH 26	TUESDAY, MARCH 27	WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28	THURSDAY, MARCH 29	FRIDAY, MARCH 30	SATURDAY, MARCH 31
<p>2003—George W.[MD] Bush signs an Executive Order giving Dick "Dick" Cheney unprecedented power to classify information.</p> <p>2003—Four Air Force generals are sacked over a massive rape scandal.</p> <p>1997—Florida's "Old Sparky" sets Pedro Medina on fire as it kills him.</p> <p>1971—Three dairy coops get \$600 million in milk price supports for a \$427,000 "contribution" towards Dick "Original Dick" Nixon's re-election.</p> <p>1966—"Of all the forms of inequality," says MLK Jr., "injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."</p> <p>1966—Fifteen WW II and Korean War veterans burn discharge papers in NYC to protest the Vietnam War.</p> <p>1965—In Montgomery, Ala., 25,000 civil rights marchers arrive at the state capitol, thanks to the National Guard.</p> <p>1955—U.S. Customs seizes Allen Ginsburg's "Howl" as "obscene."</p> <p>1947—A Centralia, Ill. coal mine, long the subject of ignored complaints and warnings, explodes, killing 111.</p> <p>1931—In Alabama, the Scottsboro Boys are arrested on bogus charges.</p> <p>1931—RIP, Ida B. Wells: daughter of slaves, her pen helped end lynching.</p> <p>1911—The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire kills 146 sweatshop workers in New York City. The factory's fire doors had been locked to enhance productivity.</p> <p>1894—During the nation's worst depression to date, "Coxey's Army" starts tramping from Massillon, Ohio, to D.C., in a protest for work.</p>	<p>2006—Justice Antonin Scalia is photographed on the steps of a Boston church, making an obscene gesture.</p> <p>1993—Cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev returns to Earth, where the USSR that sent him into orbit is no more.</p> <p>1984—Don Rumsfeld, the once and future U.S. Secretary of Defense, schmoozes in Baghdad with Iraq's Foreign Minister and gives him Ronald Reagan's best wishes.</p> <p>1982—Ground is broken for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.</p> <p>1972—Gen. John D. Lavelle loses two stars and command of the 7th Air Force for following Nixon's secret orders to bomb North Vietnam.</p> <p>1968—"A dozen 'Wise Men' tell LBJ it's time to get out of Vietnam."</p> <p>1965—Gen. Westmoreland asks for 40,000 more men in Vietnam.</p> <p>1920—After the rope breaks, James Johnson tells his executioners in Poplar Bluff, Mo., "Hurry up, boys, and get me out of my misery." They do.</p> <p>1892—Walt Whitman, the great American poet, utters his last words, "Hold me up, I want to s...t."</p> <p>1676—Narragansetts wipe out a force of 60 Colonial soldiers and 20 Wampanoag allies, nine by torture, in what's now Central Falls, R.I.</p> <p>1669—Jane Walford, the Editor's great x 8 grandmother, recovers damages for an allegation of witchcraft.</p> <p>752—Three days after his election, and before his consecration, Pope-elect Stephen II dies of a stroke.</p>	<p>2007—After making a "bang/pop/twang sound," a Robinson R44 augers in at Point Vedra Beach, Fla. An instructor and a student pay the ultimate price for corporate profit: an over-worked mechanic screwed up.</p> <p>2003—Iraq "can really finance its own reconstruction and relatively soon," U.S. Undersecretary for Defense Paul Wolfowitz tells Congress. "There's a lot of money to pay for this that doesn't have to be U.S. taxpayer money."</p> <p>1986—Congress slashes welfare while approving \$100 million for a drug gang called "The Contras."</p> <p>1964—History's 2nd largest earthquake hits Anchorage; 115 die.</p> <p>1943—So their forged ID's might avoid Nazi detection, openly gay Dutch artist Willem Arondeus and others bomb the Amsterdam Public Records Office. It works.</p> <p>1942—RADM John W. Wilcox, Jr., commanding a task force bound for Scapa Flow, is washed off his flagship and lost one day out of Casco Bay.</p> <p>1931—Having drunk Parisian tap water three weeks earlier to prove that it was safe, British novelist Arnold Bennett dies of typhoid fever.</p> <p>1814—A (severed) nose count shows General Andy Jackson's troops, with a 3-1 advantage, massacred 85 percent of their Creek opponents at Horseshoe Bend on the Tallapoosa.</p> <p>1800—Federalist Senators find <i>Aurora</i> editor W. Duane in contempt for publishing the truth about them.</p>	<p>2007—Phyllis Schlafly explains to Bates students that a married woman "has consented to sex, and I don't think you can call it rape."</p> <p>2003—Two U.S. "Warthog" aircraft mistakenly strafe British tanks in Iraq killing one soldier.</p> <p>2003—"The enemy we're fighting [in Iraq]," General William S. Wallace admits, "is different from the one we'd war-gamed against."</p> <p>1993—A Robinson R22 helicopter proves un-flyable after the main rotor lops off the tail rotor. Two die when it crashes in Wissen, Germany.</p> <p>1979—An automatic emergency cooling system activates after a stuck pressure-relief valve dumps too much coolant, but it's overridden by operators who fail to see a hidden indicator light: the core of a nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania partially melts, releasing 43K curies.</p> <p>1967—The RAF begins dropping bombs on the <i>Torrey Canyon</i>, hoping to mitigate a catastrophic oil spill in the English Channel; half the bombs miss the huge target.</p> <p>1942—Brits disable a Nazi dry dock at St. Nazaire by ramming it with an explosive-laden destroyer.</p> <p>1920—On Palm Sunday, 38 tornadoes in 8 states kill 380 people.</p> <p>1884—A mob in Cincinnati tries to lynch a white murderer. Thwarted, the mob grows to 10,000. Gunbattles rage. Order is restored by the State Militia: 56 dead and 300 wounded.</p>	<p>2003—<i>Newsweek</i> publishes a poll saying 74 percent of Americans think the Bush administration has "a well thought-out military plan."</p> <p>1995—Rep. Dan Burton [R-Ind.] says the U.S. "should place an aircraft carrier off the coast of [land-locked] Bolivia and crop dust the coca fields."</p> <p>1984—Owner Robert Irsay sneaks his Colts out of Baltimore to avoid an eminent domain seizure by the City.</p> <p>1973—Army Master Sergeant Max Beilke becomes the last U.S. combat soldier to leave Vietnam. He will die at the Pentagon, a civilian, on 9/11/01.</p> <p>1972—The EPA lays off enforcement for a lead smelter in Idaho in exchange for a \$100,000 "contribution" to the Nixon re-election campaign.</p> <p>1971—A court martial elects Lt. W. Calley No. 1 scapegoat for My Lai. For at least 22 murders, Calley gets life in prison, later reduced to three years in confinement to his apartment.</p> <p>1960—For reasons which are unfathomable, France launches a nuclear sub.</p> <p>1951—Julius and Ethel Rosenberg are convicted of espionage.</p> <p>1929—Abdulaziz ibn Abdul Rahman Al Saud's army defeats Ikhwan rebels at Sabilla, demonstrating the obsolescence of camel-mounted cavalry and the efficacy of machine guns.</p> <p>1843—At a Cabinet meeting, Secretary of War John C. Spencer lunges at Secretary of the Navy Abel P. Upshur. The ensuing fistfight is halted by President John Tyler.</p>	<p>2008—As he throws out the first pitch at Washington's new National Park, George W.[MD] Bush is met with a resounding chorus of boos.</p> <p>2003—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announces "we know where" Iraq's WMDs are: "the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south, and north somewhat."</p> <p>2003—During a live Fox News broadcast from Iraq, Geraldo Rivera reveals the 101st Airborne's current location, where they're going to attack next, and when.</p> <p>2000—Fred Trump III, whose son is chronically ill and needs special care, learns his family's health care is being terminated by his uncle Donald.</p> <p>1981—In D.C., John Hinckley Jr. empties a six-shooter at Pres. Ronald Reagan. One shot ricochets off the armored limo and hits Ronnie. Al Haig announces, "As of now, I'm in control here." Meanwhile, in Denver, John's older brother Scott cancels a scheduled dinner engagement with V.P. George Herbert [Hoover] Walker Bush's son Neil.</p> <p>1972—Hanoi's Easter Offensive sends 200,000 PAVN soldiers across the DMZ: the mightiest attack since China crossed the Yalu.</p> <p>1965—A Viet Cong car bomb explodes outside the U.S. Embassy in Saigon killing 22 and injuring 183.</p> <p>1870—The 15th Amendment passes, giving the right to vote to all, regardless of race. All males, that is.</p>	<p>2016—Darcie Rae Hall, 36, of Troy, is arrested in Keene for selling "Donald Trump" brand heroin.</p> <p>2004—In Fallujah, four American contractors are ambushed, killed, and their bodies displayed from a bridge.</p> <p>1990—Protesting Maggie Thatcher's regressive poll tax, 250,000 gather in London. Mounted cops charge, igniting the Battle of Trafalgar Square.</p> <p>1980—The American banking industry is deregulated. What could possibly go wrong?</p> <p>1969—As per his instructions, the body of Dwight D. Eisenhower is transported via baggage car, like any other U.S. serviceman, to its final resting place in Abilene, Kan.</p> <p>1968—Lyndon Johnson announces he won't run for re-election, delighting millions who have no inkling of who will replace him.</p> <p>1966—In New York City, 200,000 gather to protest the Vietnam War.</p> <p>1951—U.N. troops fight their way back to the 38th parallel in Korea.</p> <p>1931—The Motion Picture Production Code starts taking fun out of life.</p> <p>1929—PR pioneer Edward Bernays, working for the American Tobacco Co., pays women to publicly smoke Luckies in New York's Easter Parade.</p> <p>1880—In Wabash, Ind., the first electric street lighting is turned on.</p> <p>1854—Japan's Tokugawa shogunate agrees to open two ports to foreign trade, persuaded by Commodore Perry's cannons.</p>

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