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**From:** Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman  
**Sent:** Sun 7/16/2017 3:11:07 PM  
**Subject:** POLITICO Playbook, presented by Better Medicare Alliance: MCCAIN OUT due to eye surgery: McConnell delays health care vote -- The president's week ahead -- DAWSEY DOWNLOAD -- Sekulow makes Sunday rounds -- RNC's talking points on DON JR. -- WEEKEND READS

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Today's POLITICO Playbook presented by Better Medicare Alliance  
07/16/2017 11:08 AM EDT

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## Driving the Day

**Good Sunday morning. BREAKING LATE LAST NIGHT -- JOHN MCCAIN OUT DUE TO EYE SURGERY -- STATEMENT FROM SENATE MAJORITY LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL:** "Elaine and I, along with the entire Senate family, wish John the very best and wish him a speedy recovery. There are few people tougher than my friend John McCain, and I know he'll be back with us soon. Our thoughts are with Cindy and his family, his staff, and the people of Arizona.

**"While John is recovering, the Senate will continue our work** on legislative items and nominations, and will defer consideration of the Better Care Act."

-- **BURGESS EVERETT** and **SEUNG MIN KIM**, who broke the news of the delay: "The Senate may consider the Federal Drug Administration user fees extension and lower level nominees while McCain is out. The chamber may also try to raise the debt limit. McConnell canceled two weeks of recess last week as GOP senators grew antsy at the swelling workload. That leaves the Kentucky Republican the option of bringing up the health care vote in August if McCain is able to return." <http://politi.co/2tXZAim>

**WHAT DOES THE DELAY MEAN?** Who knows for sure, but here are some factors in play: it will give the White House and Senate leaders more time to lobby undecided lawmakers and governors to support the bill, but opponents are also on the march, and they could also benefit from the delay. Right now, there's no real sign of momentum. Yes, senators are holding their fire for now, but if this bill is going to pass, people need to start getting to yes.

**SINCE FRIDAY NIGHT**, the president of the United States has tweeted five times about

the U.S. Women's Open at a golf club that bears his name.

-- **TWEETS THIS MORNING: at 6:35 a.m.:** "HillaryClinton can illegally get the questions to the Debate & delete 33,000 emails but my son Don is being scorned by the Fake News Media?" ... **at 6:51 a.m.:** "Thank you to all of the supporters, who far outnumbered the protesters, yesterday at the Women's U.S. Open. Very cool!" ... **at 7:04 a.m.:** "Thank you to former campaign adviser Michael Caputo for saying so powerfully that there was no Russian collusion in our winning campaign." ... **at 7:15 a.m.:** "With all of its phony unnamed sources & highly slanted & even fraudulent reporting, #Fake News is DISTORTING DEMOCRACY in our country!" ... **at 10:10 a.m.:** "The ABC/Washington Post Poll, even though almost 40% is not bad at this time, was just about the most inaccurate poll around election time!"

**ALSO:** How is a 36 percent approval rating "not bad at this time?"

**WHAT THE PRESIDENT DOESN'T WANT TO READ -- "Poll finds Trump's standing weakened since springtime,"** by WaPo's Scott Clement and Dan Balz: "Approaching six months in office, Trump's overall approval rating has dropped to 36 percent from 42 percent in April. His disapproval rating has risen five points to 58 percent. Overall, 48 percent say they 'disapprove strongly' of Trump's performance in office, a level never reached by former presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama and reached only in the second term of George W. Bush in Post-ABC polling." <http://wapo.st/2tX7IXd>

**THINGS THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT TWEETED ABOUT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS:** Wishing John McCain well after he announced he'd have surgery for a blood clot in his eye. Urging senators to raise the debt ceiling or pass the health care bill. Urging House Republicans to pass the air-traffic control overhaul bill, which is in big trouble.

-- **"Trump becomes the star of the show at Bedminster,"** by Andrew Restuccia in Bedminster, New Jersey: <http://politi.co/2uvijEU>

**TRUMP's WEEK AHEAD -- Monday:** Trump meets with VP Mike Pence at 12:30 p.m. for lunch, then meets with Secretary of State Rex Tillerson at 1:30 p.m., and then he has a "Made in America product showcase" at 3 p.m. ... **Tuesday:** Trump meets with H.R. McMaster at 11 a.m. ... **Wednesday :** Trump has "Made in America certification event." ... **Thursday:** Trump makes a "Made in America announcement." ... **Saturday:** Trump attends the commissioning of the Gerald R. Ford CVN 78, a new aircraft carrier. The aircraft carrier is in Norfolk.

**NYT's JONATHAN MARTIN and ALEX BURNS: "Governors Give Chilly Reception to Health Bill Push":** "At a private luncheon for governors on Saturday, three Democratic governors called for the group to release some sort of joint, bipartisan statement on the health bill. Gov. Dannel P. Malloy of Connecticut proposed a letter formally opposing the Senate legislation, while Gov. Terry McAuliffe of Virginia, the chairman of the National Governors Association, and Gov. Steve Bullock of Montana suggested a more restrained approach that would communicate their unease with the

measure. But a handful of Republican governors opposed making a collective statement, noting there was no broad agreement about the nature of their opposition. 'It's important if anything goes out under the name of the N.G.A. that it has the endorsement of members certainly, and I think there was not consensus on that,' Gov. Matt Bevin of Kentucky, a Republican who voiced his discomfort with a joint communiqué during the lunch, said after the session." <http://nyti.ms/2tXJgQe>

**THE DAWSEY DOWNLOAD** -- At a recent Capitol Hill meeting of Senate communicators on health care messaging, a Trump press aide said the White House would also be focusing on its "energy week." The comment drew private guffaws, according to three people familiar with it. "What the hell is energy week?" one person familiar with the comment mused afterwards.

**As the debate on one of the president's core agenda items** has unfolded, some Hill aides and advisers have grown increasingly frustrated -- and even amazed -- that Trump hasn't used much besides his Twitter and a radio address to talk health care. No rallies on the topic. Few public comments. Two foreign trips in three weeks. Non-stop scandals and revelations. Fights with TV anchors on Twitter. "Does he just watch Fox all day?" one Hill aide asked.

**And they have noted that Trump often uses "they"** when referring to Republicans, almost like he's not even a part of the discussion. One person close to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell noted how aggressive President Obama was in passing his health care law and added: "His people keep saying he's going to do more, or travel, or this or that, but it never seems to materialize."

**What emerges from conversations with West Wing aides** is that many, outside of Vice President Mike Pence, legislative affairs head Marc Short and a few others, have moved on. Many in the West Wing say they don't see a way for the bill to succeed -- and some privately note it "isn't the most popular thing," in the words of one. So while Short and his team have continued to visit the Hill every day, and Medicaid administrator Seema Verma has tried to woo weary senators, the White House often doesn't seem like one fighting for a signature policy item that could wide-ranging ramifications on the rest of its agenda.

**YA CAN'T MAKE IT UP** -- Cyndi Lauper brought Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) on stage Friday night in Bangor. <http://bit.ly/2t4rCYg>

**THE MAN IN THE ROOM** -- NYT A1, "Soviet Veteran Who Met With Trump Jr. Is a Master of the Dark Arts," by Andrew Higgins and Andrew E. Kramer in Moscow: "Rinat Akhmetshin, the Russian-American lobbyist who met with Donald Trump Jr. at Trump Tower in June 2016, had one consistent message for the journalists who met him over the years at the luxury hotels where he stayed in Moscow, London and Paris, or at his home on a leafy street in Washington: Never use email to convey information that needed to be kept secret. While not, he insisted, an expert in the technical aspects of hacking nor, a spy, Mr. Akhmetshin talked openly about how he had worked with a

counterintelligence unit while serving with the Red Army after its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan and how easy it was to find tech-savvy professionals ready and able to plunder just about any email account. ...

**"Mr. Akhmetshin, a gregarious, fast-talking man with a sharp sense of humor, was a skilled practitioner in the muscular Russian version of what in American politics is known as opposition research. From his base in Washington, Mr. Akhmetshin has been hired by an ever-changing roster of clients, often Russians, to burnish their image and blacken those of their rivals. Some clients were close to the Kremlin. Others were its bitter foes."** <http://nyti.ms/2tfCs1z>

-- **"Here Are the RNC's Talking Points on Donald Trump Jr.,"** by The Daily Beast's Betsy Woodruff: "The [RNC] is directing its allied TV talking heads to emphasize that even though his son's meeting with a Kremlin-linked Russian attorney was harmless, President Donald Trump's attorney says the president didn't know about it. That's according to 'Pundit Prep,' a semi-regular email blast the RNC's communications team sends out to friendly TV and radio commentators ... The Daily Beast reviewed the email, which provides insight into how the GOP is gearing up for questions from the media on the president's son. 'Don Jr. has been transparent about the logistics and substance of the meeting,' one of the talking points says. 'He has released emails pertaining to the matter without being asked, and he has stated that he will happily cooperate with Congressional Committees should they need to investigate the matter further.'" <http://thebea.st/2uxhllh>

-- **"Trump campaign paid \$50,000 to Trump Jr.'s attorney,"** by Maggie Severns: "President Donald Trump appears to have used more than half a million dollars in campaign funds to pay legal fees over the last three months, new campaign filings show. The spending included \$50,000 in legal expenses to lawyer Alan Futerfas, who is now representing Donald Trump Jr., on June 27th. Trump disclosed \$677,826 in payments described in filings as 'legal consulting' between April and June of 2017 - a significant chunk of the \$4.37 million his campaign spent overall - as the number and velocity of investigations into potential Russian interference in the 2016 election increased. ...

**"Trump's campaign** and two affiliated joint fundraising committees disclosed raising \$13.9 million on Saturday. ... The Trump campaign made the payment to Futerfas two weeks before The New York Times reported an exchange between Trump Jr. and a Russian official about arranging a meeting to discuss damaging research on the Clinton campaign. Futerfas' involvement was first reported by Reuters on July 10th." <http://politi.co/2tXUx1j>

**WHAT AMERICA IS READING -- THE DESERT SUN** (Palm Springs, California): "GOP PUSHES TRUMP ON NATIONAL MONUMENTS" <http://bit.ly/2us1OIQ> ... **THE MERCURY NEWS** (San Jose): "San Jose cat killer gets max sentence: Inability to prove sexual abuse of animals means man will serve time in county jail" <http://bit.ly/2us01U9> ... **DENVER POST:** "Premiums could spike: State health insurers aim for an average of

a 27 percent increase" <http://bit.ly/2v5NTq3> ...

... **CHICAGO TRIBUNE:** "Obama center adds Exelon to top-donors list ... Microsoft also contributing over \$1M" <http://bit.ly/2uxq18w> ... **LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL:** "Revised health bill near collapse: Heller could cast the deciding vote" <http://bit.ly/2v67B4K> ... **AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN:** "Texas leads in farms bought by foreigners" <http://bit.ly/2tfXVaA>

**FOR YOUR RADAR -- NYT A1, "Iran Dominates in Iraq After U.S. 'Handed the Country Over,'" by Tim Arango:** "Walk into almost any market in Iraq and the shelves are filled with goods from Iran - milk, yogurt, chicken. Turn on the television and channel after channel broadcasts programs sympathetic to Iran. A new building goes up? It is likely that the cement and bricks came from Iran. And when bored young Iraqi men take pills to get high, the illicit drugs are likely to have been smuggled across the porous Iranian border. And that's not even the half of it. Across the country, Iranian-sponsored militias are hard at work establishing a corridor to move men and guns to proxy forces in Syria and Lebanon. And in the halls of power in Baghdad, even the most senior Iraqi cabinet officials have been blessed, or bounced out, by Iran's leadership."  
<http://nyti.ms/2v6dcrX>

**POLITICO MAGAZINE: "What Politicos Are Reading This Summer:**Recommendations from 20 of the most interesting people we know" including Sen. John McCain, Leon Panetta, Jill Abramson, Gail Sheehy, David Petraeus, Bill Gates, Paul Ryan, Kori Schake, Jonathan Chait, Hugh Hewitt, Lawrence Tribe, Andrew Sullivan, Mitch Landrieu. <http://politi.co/2tXusRI>

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from BMA: HEALTH CARE POLICY ALERT:** We can all agree that high need, high cost patients deserve the right care. And with Medicare Advantage, seniors and people with disabilities are getting the high-value care they need through flexible benefits and specialized care. Learn more:  
<http://www.bettermedicarealliance.org/special-needs-plans> \*\*\*\*\*

**SUNDAY BEST -- CHUCK TODD speaks with SENATE MAJORITY WHIP JOHN CORNYN (R-TEXAS) on NBC'S "MEET THE PRESS": TODD:** "One of the things you were criticizing the Democrats back in 2010 during health care, you said the following, 'Americans have already seen and rejected the way Democrats bought their way to 60 votes in the Senate including political payoffs such as the Louisiana Purchase, the Cornhusker Kickback and billions of dollars in Gatorade.' Senator, as you know, this revised bill had a special carve to for Alaska, had money that senators from West Virginia and Ohio wanted for the opioid fund. The point is somebody from the other side of the aisle could easily say you guys are doing the same thing. You have redesigned the bill specifically to get wavering votes. You accept that criticism?"

**CORNYN:** "There's no state specific relief here. But what there is an attempt to try to accommodate the concerns of those states that expanded Medicaid under Obamacare and those that did not. And that's the hard task ahead of us. But I believe we're making

great progress as a result of the good work of the administration, particularly CMS administrator Seema Verma and Dr. Price. People are now understanding the benefits of this better care plan in terms of bringing down the price of health care and making it more available to more people as they can choose what they want at a price they can afford."

**TODD:** "If this health care bill does not pass, what's next? Some say it was a threat, but Senator McConnell has said it means you're going to have to work with the Democrats. Is that what happens?" **CORNYN :** "Well, if we're not successful now I assume we'll keep trying. But at some point if Democrats won't participate in the process then we're going to have to come up with a different plan. But what I don't want to happen is for us to just do a multi-billion dollar bailout of insurance companies without any reforms."

-- **JOHN DICKERSON** speaks to **SEN. RAND PAUL (R-KY.)** on **CBS's "FACE THE NATION"** -- **DICKERSON:** "The bill has been delayed because of Senator McCain's surgery on Friday. How will that change the way this goes forward?" **PAUL:** "You know, I think the longer the bill's out there, the more conservative Republicans are going to discover that it's not repeal. And the more that everybody's going to discover that it keeps the fundamental flaw of Obamacare."

-- **FOX NEWS'S CHRIS WALLACE** also spoke with **SEN. RAND PAUL:** **WALLACE:** "Whenever it comes up, whenever Sen. McCain is in good health and comes back, does Senate Majority Leader McConnell have the votes to pass this revised bill?" **PAUL:** "You know, I don't think right now he does, and the real problem we have is you know we won four elections on repealing Obamacare but this bill keeps most of the Obamacare taxes, keeps most of the regulations, keeps most of the subsidies and creates something that Republicans have never been for, and that's a giant insurance bailout super fund. That's not a Republican idea to give taxpayer money to a private industry that already makes \$15 billion in profit."

-- **JON KARL** spoke with **JAY SEKULOW** on **ABC'S "THIS WEEK":** **KARL:** "Sen. Warner says that he is concerned the president will issue pardons to the key figures in this investigation. Will the president rule out giving pardons to people like Michael Flynn, Paul Manafort, any others that are in this investigation." **SEKULOW:** "I have not had that conversation with the president about any of that and I wouldn't share it if I did because it would be attorney-client privilege. But I've not had that conversation with the president on that and what he could or could not do. He can pardon individuals, of course that's because the founders of our country put that in the United States Constitution -- the power of pardon. But I have not had those conversations, so I could not speculate on that."

**KARL:** "So pardoning the key figures in this investigation is not off the table."  
**SEKULOW:** "No, I can't say that. The president told me in conversations that I've had with him about a variety of issues. But we've not talked about pardoning individuals in this at all. So you're asking me to speculate on something I cannot speculate on."

**JAKE TAPPER** speaks with **SEN. MARK WARNER (D-VA.)** on **CNN'S "STATE OF THE UNION":** **TAPPER:** "Do you think Kushner's security clearance should be suspended?" **WARNER:** "Listen, I think -- I'm trying to give all these people the benefit of the doubt until I get a chance to talk to them, until we get a chance to interview them. But it's very bothersome to me that Jared Kushner has forgotten not once, not twice, but three times to put down this information. But, again, we see this pattern. General Flynn failed to put down information. He got fired.

**"The attorney general failed** to disclose information. He had to recuse himself. We had examples that were put out about what the firing of Jim Comey was about. Then the president himself said he fired Jim Comey because of the Russia thing. So, the level of credibility from the senior levels of this administration really is suspect, and I think suspect regardless of which political party you belong to."

--**JOHN DICKERSON** also spoke with **SEN. MARK WARNER (D-Va.)** - **DICKERSON:** "Another area that it appears you're interested in is the data operation of the Trump campaign, which Jared Kushner was overseeing. Explain that. And is that, again, another extrapolation? Or do you have some evidence for that inquiry?" **WARNER:** "Well, we do know that there was a series of Russian trolls, paid individuals, who worked for the Russian services that were trying to interfere and put fake news out. We also know they created what's called bots. In effect, Internet robots that actually could interfere as well. The question we have is: Did they somehow get information from some of the Trump campaign efforts to target that interference? We don't know that for sure. But what we do want to know is - I'd like to talk to the folks with Cambridge Analytica. I'd like to talk to some of the folks from the Trump digital campaign."

## Playbook Reads

**PHOTO DU JOUR:** President Donald Trump waves to spectators as he watches the third round of the U.S. Women's Open Golf tournament from his observation booth on July 15 in Bedminster, New Jersey. | Seth Wenig/AP Photo

**COMING ATTRACTIONS -- "Comey's Writing a Book, and Publishers Are Eager to Pay Big Money for It,"** by NYT's Alexandra Alter: "James B. Comey, the former F.B.I. director who was fired in May by President Trump, is writing a book about his experience in public service, including his tumultuous and brief tenure in the Trump administration. Mr. Comey has been meeting with editors and publishers in New York in recent days, and is being represented by Keith Urbahn and Matt Latimer, partners at the literary agency Javelin. The book is expected to go to auction this coming week, and all the major publishing houses have expressed keen interest, Mr. Latimer said."  
<http://nyti.ms/2vqF3SS>

**BUSINESS BURST -- "New Jets Threaten Airbus and Boeing Duopoly: Competitors**

from China, Russia and Canada are moving into the so-called single-aisle air market," by WSJ's Robert Wall in Le Bourget, France: "Boeing and Airbus suddenly have competition. For nearly two decades, the two have had the global market for big commercial jets largely to themselves. That is all changing, with three new competitors- from China, Russia and Canada-rolling out their own entrees into the so-called single-aisle market. Orders for these new jets are few for now, and the Russian and Chinese makers won't deliver planes for years. The jury is also still out on how popular they will ever be. Boeing and Airbus, meanwhile, are selling plenty of their own, tried and tested work horses in the category." <http://on.wsj.com/2tXmqrT>

**BEYOND THE BELTWAY -- "Darrell Issa was Obama's toughest critic. Here's why he's suddenly sounding like a moderate,"** by L.A. Times' Sarah D. Wire: "The hundreds of protesters who show up weekly to wave signs outside Rep. Darrell Issa's office in a drab office park in Vista, Calif., have written a song for him to the tune of 'Oh! Susanna.' 'Darrell Issa, you've got to oversee. You need to check-and-balance [Trump] before it's World War III,' they sing toward the tinted windows of the building. As chairman of the committee charged with overseeing the executive branch, Issa was once known as President Obama's toughest critic.

**"Now the richest man in Congress** has found himself with protesters at his door, no committee to lead, and a tough race expected in 2018. It has forced the nine-term congressman to walk a shaky line, reassuring his conservative base that he's not moderating his positions while showing the growing number of independents and Democrats in his district that he's not as partisan as people think." <http://lat.ms/2tX1UHW>

**NEW DETAILS EMERGING -- "GOP donor Peter W. Smith's final day: 'It seemed like he had a lot on his mind',"** by L.A. Times' Katherine Skiba, David Heinzmann and Todd Lighty: "Months after he said he'd started to quietly work to contact Russian hackers to look for a cache of Hillary Clinton's emails, Peter W. Smith called the Wall Street Journal on May 4 to explain. The next day, the longtime Republican operative and donor checked into a hotel near the Mayo Clinic, far from his Chicago-area home, police records show.

**"Smith, 81, would kill himself** there 10 days later. The detailed notes he left behind spoke to failing health since January. Also in January, his son David entered a state prison following a conviction on aggravated criminal sexual abuse charges, state records show. The notes also cite an expiring \$5 million life insurance policy, and property records show he sold his Gold Coast condo last year amid a foreclosure threat." <http://lat.ms/2ux0ipJ>

**\*\*\*\*\* A message from BMA: MEDICARE ADVANTAGE TAILORED CARE MEETS THE NEED OF HIGH COST, HIGH NEED CARE SENIORS:** 18.5 million seniors and people with disabilities choose Medicare Advantage for one reason: it gives them the affordable, robust, and individualized health care they need. And with health needs in this country becoming more complex, it's clear that innovative, holistic solutions are

required.

Under Medicare Advantage, Special Needs Plans (SNPs) specializes care for the health care system's fastest growing and most costly and complex care beneficiaries - frail, disabled, and chronically-ill Medicare beneficiaries. SNPs tailor benefits, provider networks, and prescription drug coverage to best meet the needs of the beneficiaries they serve. In addition to providing Traditional Medicare benefits, SNPs also provide reduced cost sharing and enhanced benefits related social services, wellness and home care. SNPs are designed to address complex conditions by providing better access to specialized care for those who need it most. Learn more:

<http://www.bettermedicarealliance.org/special-needs-plans> \*\*\*\*\*

**BONUS GREAT WEEKEND READS**, curated by Daniel Lippman, filing from Great Barrington, Massachusetts:

-- "**Modern Economists: The Inept Firefighters' Club**," by Dean Baker in Democracy Journal: "Suppose that our fire department was staffed with out-of-shape incompetents. That would be really bad news, but it wouldn't be obvious most of the time because we don't often see major fires. The inadequacy of the fire department would become apparent only when a major fire hit and we were left with a vast amount of unnecessary death and destruction. This is essentially the story of modern economics."

<http://bit.ly/2tqeXhz>

-- "**The Laws of Attraction**," by Wendy Paris on the cover of July's Psychology Today: "Who we desire is driven by powerful evolutionary forces, but while most of us are drawn to looks first (whether or not we admit it), human attraction is far more complex than it appears at first sight." <http://bit.ly/2tW2uUF>

-- "**What happened when Walmart left**," by The Guardian's Ed Pilkington: "In West Virginia, the people of McDowell County can't get jobs, and recently lost their biggest employer - the local Walmart store. They describe the devastating loss of jobs, community and access to fresh food." <http://bit.ly/2vnKrWR>

-- "**Balancing Act**," by Luiza Ch. Savage on the cover of the July issue of Delta Sky magazine: "Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is busy running his country at home and abroad -- all while being a father, an active outdoorsman and the son of a former prime minister." <http://bit.ly/2vnCTne> ... **The cover** <http://bit.ly/2vnCtNN>

-- "**Trump's Russian Laundromat**," by Craig Unger on the cover of TNR: "Whether Trump knew it or not, Russian mobsters and corrupt oligarchs used his properties not only to launder vast sums of money from extortion, drugs, gambling, and racketeering, but even as a base of operations for their criminal activities. In the process, they propped up Trump's business and enabled him to reinvent his image. Without the Russian mafia, it is fair to say, Donald Trump would not be president of the United States." <http://bit.ly/2t1C2YH>

-- **"Next-Door Strangers: The Crisis of Urban Anonymity,"** by Marc J. Dunkelman in the University of Virginia's Hedgehog Review: "Today's reinvigorated cities boast much of what made urban America so vibrant during its heyday. The cultural amenities, the coffeehouse culture, the vast diversity, and even the convenience of public transit have emerged in places for which, in the mid-1970s, conventional wisdom predicted continued decline. But one feature distinguishes today's urban meccas from those of eras past. The core sociological building block that Jane Jacobs celebrated in 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities'-the Dunbarian village instantiated in an urban neighborhood-has all but collapsed." <http://bit.ly/2upoXMm>

-- **"The Night the Lights Went Out on Broadway,"** by Neil Demause in the Village Voice: "Forty years ago, a blackout plunged New York into what seemed like a failing city's final moment of chaos. Here's how it really looked." <http://bit.ly/2uqqC44>

--**"Did Brits Kill New York City Cops to Get U.S. into WWII?"** by Marc Wortman in The Daily Beast: "For 77 years the culprits behind a July 4, 1940, terror bombing at the New York World's Fair have never been found. Is this the answer?" <http://thebea.st/2t4yzZj>

-- **"Of money and morals,"** by Alex Mayyasi in Aeon Magazine: "Today, a banker listening to a theologian seems like a curiosity, a category error. But for most of history, this kind of dialogue was the norm. Hundreds of years ago, when modern finance arose in Europe, money lenders moderated their behaviour in response to debates among the clergy about how to apply the Bible's teachings to an increasingly complex economy." <http://bit.ly/2v2QkcV>

-- **"Burn Me Like a Forest Fire,"** by Leigh Cowart in Hazlitt: "Just because a forest is built to burn, or needs to burn, it doesn't mean the process is benign. I think a lot about those forests burning. I wonder if the trees are screaming. I wonder where the birds go. I wonder how on earth anything could ever escape an inferno, never mind find within the wreckage the raw materials of rebuilding. I think about my marriage. I know now that I made my home in a volatile forest." <http://bit.ly/2vnBBsv>

-- **"A Kingdom for a Horse,"** by Will Boast in VQR: "The most decorated athlete in all of Kazakhstan is a five-year-old Mongolian horse named Lazer. ... In the ancient nomadic game known here as kokpar (roughly, 'goat grabbing'), Lazer is a champion many times over, with eight Kazakh National Games and two Central Asian Games titles to his name. Kokpar's premise is simple: Two teams compete over a headless, freshly slaughtered goat, wrestling control back and forth in an attempt to score by flinging it into the opponent's goal." <http://bit.ly/2tqFuve>

-- **"Nuclear plant shutdowns a crisis for small towns across the USA,"** by The Journal News' Thomas Zambito: <http://lohud.us/2vgGZxb>

-- **"The Return of Monopoly,"** by Matt Stoller in TNR: "With Amazon on the rise and a business tycoon in the White House, can a new generation of Democrats return the

party to its trust-busting roots?" <http://bit.ly/2tq9iMz>

-- "**The Louisiana Environmental Apocalypse Road Trip**," by Justin Nobel in Longreads: "Louisiana serves as a terrifying example of what can become of a state that shortchanges science and environmental regulations to boost industry and infrastructure." <http://bit.ly/2t1sGvT>

-- "**A New Era of Competition**," by Christopher Walker in International Reports: "The growing threat from authoritarian internationalism as a global challenge to democracy." <http://bit.ly/2unxOy8>

## Playbookers

**SPOTTED IN NANTUCKET:** Greta Van Susteren yesterday afternoon, strolling on Federal Street.

**SPOTTED IN MARTHA'S VINEYARD** at an all new DSCC "Legacy Circle" members lunch yesterday at the home of Christopher Celeste and Nancy Kramer: Phil Munger, Tony Podesta, Heather Podesta, Nancy and Harold Zirkin, Larry Parks, Robert Roche, Neil Simon, Sens. Gary Peters (D-Mich.), Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Al Franken (D-Minn.) and Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.). On the menu: Salmon and steak, corn, cherry tomatoes orzo with asparagus and Caesar salad. To be part of the "Legacy Circle," donors have to max out to the DSCC five years in a row.

**TRANSITIONS -- Lila Nieves-Lee** is starting on Monday at USTR as their new director of congressional affairs. She was previously the Trade LA for House Ways and Means. ... **Mike Naple**, a former Obama HHS communications director, is now strategic communications director at Smoot Tewes Group. ... **William Murray** is joining R Street Institute as federal energy policy manager. He was editor of RealClearPolitics' energy page for the last two years.

**ENGAGED - Natalie Andrews**, social media editor and Congress reporter at the Wall Street Journal, got engaged on Friday to **Christopher Silva**, who is moving to Washington in a few weeks to be the director of housing at AU. Silva is also pursuing a doctorate in higher education. He asked her: "Will you marry me?" She replied: "Are you serious?! I mean, yes!" He responded: "Yes!" Then she said: "Then, YES!" The couple met and dated at Utah State in 2004 and reconnected last year when he messaged her on Facebook. He proposed on Utah State's campus with a titanium ring he made himself. He learned how to make the rings from his grandfather in Brazil and then went to a Makers Lab in Denver to actually make the ring. It took two months. **Pics** <http://bit.ly/2ttJs6t> ... <http://bit.ly/2tYjwlf> ... **The handmade rings** <http://bit.ly/2uwFizq>

**WEEKEND WEDDING - OBAMA ALUMNI: "Leslie Jones, Benjamin Flatgard" - N.Y.**

**Times:** "The bride, 31 ...is the vice president for museum affairs and the decorative arts curator at Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, a museum and botanical garden in Nashville. She graduated from Miami University of Ohio, received a master's degree in the history of decorative arts from the Smithsonian Institution, and another master's, in the appraisal of fine and decorative art, from N.Y.U. ... The groom, 32, is a cybersecurity consultant in Nashville, and a fellow with the Atlantic Council, a research and policy center on national affairs in Washington. [He previously served as the director of cybersecurity policy at the National Security Council from 2015 to Jan. 2017 and is also a Treasury and Commerce alum.] He graduated from the University of Edinburgh. ... The couple met in 2014 through the dating app Hinge." **With pic** <http://nyti.ms/2vqqKxN>

**BIRTHDAYS:** Amanda Henneberg, COO of Cavalry ... Neil Chatterjee, picked by President Trump to be a FERC commissioner, is 4-0 ... Jeremy Martin is 4-5 (hat tip: little brother Jonathan) ... Margaret Ashbrook ... NYT's Shane Goldmacher ... Politico breaking news reporter Maddie Conway ... Chad Griffin, president of Human Rights Campaign, is 44. The team surprised him with Milk Bar's "crack pie" during HRC's summer meeting on Saturday (h/t Olivia Alair Dalton) ... Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.) is 71 ... Rep. Mike D. Rogers (R-Ala.) is 59 ... Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Ohio) is 44 ... Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.), a native of Columbia City, Ind., serving in his first term in Congress, is 38 (h/t Matt Lahr) ... former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh is 85 ... John Leovy is 52 ... Kathy Calvin, president and CEO of the UN Foundation ... Betty Hudson ... AMA's Justin DeJong ... Charles O'Shea, lobbyist at Meyer Suozzi English & Klein and former head of NYC gov't relations for the N.Y. state DOT ... Karin Johanson, former DCCC, Emily's List and Tammy Baldwin strategist ... Andrea Fisher Newman, head of Delta DC office (h/ts Steve Elmendorf) ... Chris McNulty is 47 ... Rick Limardo ... Battalion Chief James "Jake" Lemonda, president of the Uniformed Fire Officers Association of the FDNY, is 6-0 (h/t James McCarthy) ... billionaire Stef Wertheimer is 91 ... Tony Ressler, owner of the NBA's Atlanta Hawks, is 58 (h/ts Jewish Insider) ...

... **Anita McBride**, former COS to First Lady Laura Bush and now executive-in-residence at the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at AU ... Riley Roberts, principal at West Wing Writers ... Texas Supreme Court Justice Don Willett is 51. He's the "Tweeter Laureate of Texas. Former rodeo bull rider. Fluent in legalese. Extravagantly blessed husband & cofounder of 3 wee Willetts," per his Twitter bio ... Politico Europe's Guillaume Blandet and Fleur Veldhuijzen Van Zanten ... Tim Krause ... Matt Zingsheim ... Molly Ritner ... Parker Payne ... Amanda Hallberg Greenwell ... Alexis Herman ... Phil Roeder ... Martin Chase ... JT Stocks ... Jeffrey Slavin ... Karyl Bazbaz ... Neil Heinen (h/ts Teresa Vilmain) ... RNC alum Ramsey Ratcliffe ... Joe Ward, a younger brother of Jon ... Manuel Bonilla ... ABC News' Teri Whitcraft ... Michael Cwidak-Kusbach is 32 ... Lila Ibrahim Whatley ... Caroline Hughes Stevens ... Randy DeCleene is 43 ... Jeffrey Slavin ... Stephen David Simon ... Steven Levine ... Dan Cohen is 59 ... Claire E. Peters ... Parker M. Payne ... playwright Tony Kushner is 61 ... Will Ferrell is 5-0 ... Corey Feldman is 46 (h/ts AP)

\*\*\*\*\* **A message from BMA:** Better Medicare Alliance is helping to build the future of care through Medicare Advantage. As a community of experts, we're leading the way on

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