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From: Anna Palmer Jake Sherman Daniel Lippman
Sent: Thur 8/10/2017 10:37:58 AM
Subject: POLITICO Playbook, presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):
BULLETIN: NORTH KOREA says it plans to launch missiles toward GUAM -- HALEY loses two top aides --
GEORGE gets Mooch for Sunday intvw -- BILL CLINTON's reading list

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Today's POLITICO Playbook presented by the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD)
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Driving the Day

BULLETIN -- NORTH KOREA SAYS IT'S PLANNING TO FIRE MISSILES TOWARD THE U.S. TERRITORY IN AUGUST -- AP's Eric Talmadge in SEOUL at 4:59 a.m.:

"North Korea has announced a detailed plan to launch a salvo of ballistic missiles toward the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam, a major military hub and home to U.S. bombers. If carried out, it would be the North's most provocative missile launch to date.

"The announcement Thursday warned that the North is finalizing a plan to fire four of its Hwasong-12 missiles over Japan and into waters around the tiny island, which hosts 7,000 U.S. military personnel on two main bases and has a population of 160,000.

"It said the plan, which involves the missiles hitting waters 30 to 40 kilometers (19 to 25 miles) from the island, could be sent to leader Kim Jong Un for approval within a week or so. It would be up to Kim whether the move is actually carried out. ... North Korea, no stranger to bluffing, frequently uses extremely bellicose rhetoric with warnings of military action to keep its adversaries on their heels. It generally couches its threats with language stating it will not attack the United States unless it has been attacked first or has determined an attack is imminent. ...

"We keep closely watching the speech and behavior of the U.S.," it said. Such a move would not merely be a test launch, but a demonstration of military capabilities that could easily lead to severe consequences. South Korea's military responded by saying North Korea will face a "stern and strong" response from Washington and Seoul. Taking it a step further, Japan's Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera told parliament a missile attack on the U.S. territory would be a Japanese national emergency because it would threaten Japan's existence as a nation." <http://bit.ly/2ftlrtl>

-- **ERIC TALMADGE** is the AP's correspondent in Pyongyang. *His very cool Instagram feed* <http://bit.ly/2wKTqIV>

TOP-ED -- SUSAN RICE in the NYT, "It's Not Too Late on North Korea": "We have long lived with successive Kims' belligerent and colorful rhetoric - as ambassador to the United Nations in the Obama administration, I came to expect it whenever we passed resolutions. What is unprecedented and especially dangerous this time is the reaction of President Trump. Unscripted, the president said on Tuesday that if North Korea makes new threats to the United States, "they will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen." These words risk tipping the Korean Peninsula into war, if the North's leader, Kim Jong-un, believes them and acts precipitously.

"Either Mr. Trump is issuing an empty threat of nuclear war, which will further erode American credibility and deterrence, or he actually intends war next time Mr. Kim behaves provocatively. The first scenario is folly, but a United States decision to start a pre-emptive war on the Korean Peninsula, in the absence of an imminent threat, would be lunacy." <http://nyti.ms/2vRgYli>

INVESTORS SEEK SHELTER -- FT: "The Swiss franc led a rally among haven assets across global markets on Wednesday as investors retreated from equities in the wake of escalating rhetoric between North Korea and the U.S. ... The Swiss franc, often favoured in times of stress for its perceived stability, made its most notable gains against the euro, strengthening by as much as 1.5 per cent. Against the dollar the franc rose as much as 1.4 per cent." <http://on.ft.com/2urTWW1>

GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS (@georgestephopoulos): "EXCLUSIVE: I'll sit down live with @Scaramucci for his first interview since being fired from the WH, this Sunday only on @ThisWeekABC" ... **@StephenAtHome:** "On Monday 8/14 Anthony Scaramucci will be my guest on @colbertlateshow. This is just a heads up for our censors to get ready! #themooch".

Good Thursday morning. COINCIDENCE?: "Fire and fury" is a mission in the videogame "World of Warcraft." Who had a business and personal connection to "World of Warcraft"? Stephen K. Bannon (<http://slct.al/2wKMlli>).

SPOTTED: Stephen Miller, sans tie in a summer linen sportcoat, yesterday outside Woodward Table on 15th Street with his dry cleaning.

DEPARTURE LOUNGE -- "U.S. Ambassador Haley Loses Two Key Aides at United Nations," by Bloomberg's Kambiz Foroohar: "U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley has lost two of her top aides, key departures that come at a time of growing international tensions between the U.S. and North Korea.

"Haley's Chief of Staff Steven Groves resigned, as did her communications director Jonathan Wachtel. Haley said on Twitter Wednesday it was because of 'family

concerns.' The departures also come ahead of Haley's trip to Vienna to review Iran's nuclear activities with the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency. Groves, an adviser who had arrived from the conservative think tank Heritage Foundation had argued for the U.S. to 'sever relations' with UN's Human Rights Council for criticizing Israel and to pull out of the Paris climate change agreement. ...

"Both Jonathan&Steve have recently encountered family concerns,' Haley said. 'They will always be a part of the team & dear friends.'" <https://bloom.bg/2vQC4GT>

ATTN. DONALD TRUMP, MARC SHORT, STEVEN MNUCHIN and GARY COHN -- MITCH MCCONNELL SPEAKS -- by the North Kentucky Tribune's managing editor Mark Hansel: "A Congress goes on for two years and part of the reason I think that the story line is that we haven't done much is because, in part, the President and others have set these early time lines about things need to be done by a certain point,' McConnell said. ...

"Don't start judging [too] soon, the accomplishments of this congress , sending bills to this president, who will sign them,' McConnell said. 'I'm not going to tell you when we are going to finish tax reform, but we'll finish it. That's the way we begin to change America.'" ... 'I've been, and I will be again today, not a fan of tweeting -- I've said that to him privately and I've said it at other events publicly,' McConnell said. 'I think it would be helpful if the President was a little bit more on message.'" <http://bit.ly/2ww8Rih>

-- SO, JUST TO REVIEW ... This event was Monday, but has not gotten much attention (h/t Morning Money). The man who controls the Senate's calendar is not setting a timeline for tax reform, and he wishes the White House would stop setting artificial deadlines. And he says the president should stay on message. Over to you, Mr. President.

ADAM NAGOURNEY -- NYT, A1 -- "Democratic Fight in California Is a Warning for the National Party" : "California Democrats have emerged as something else: a cautionary tale for a national party debating how to rebuild and seize back power. Even at a time of overall success, state Democrats are torn by a bitter fight for the party leadership, revealing the kind of divisions -- between insiders and outsiders, liberals and moderates -- that unsettled the national party last year and could threaten its success in coming years. ...

"The fight pits Eric C. Bauman, a longtime party leader, against Kimberly Ellis, a Bay Area activist. Mr. Bauman won the election by just over 60 votes out of 3,000 cast at the party convention in May, but Ms. Ellis has refused to concede, claiming voting improprieties, like permitting ineligible people to vote for Mr. Bauman. ... Ms. Ellis, 44, has from the start presented herself as an outsider: It is her first run for party leadership. ... Mr. Bauman has spent 30 years working for the Democratic Party, including leading the Los Angeles County Democratic Party. He was a delegate for Mrs. Clinton in last year's presidential election. With his gruff demeanor and a strong-as-ever Bronx accent -- no matter that he came here 40 years ago -- he has been called 'Boss Bauman,' as Mr.

Bauman himself noted in an interview." <http://nyti.ms/2vIJYYI>

***** **A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD)** : If you know only one fact about rising drug costs, know this one: drug makers set prices for prescription drugs. To help manage nearly double-digit price increases, employers, unions and government programs use PBMs to negotiate lower net prices to help curb costs for employers and patients. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

WHAT HAPPENED TO DWS? -- MARC CAPUTO: "Blowback from staffer scandal burns Wasserman Schultz": "The chatter about a House leadership post is gone. So is talk of statewide office. After Hillary Clinton's defeat, there's no prospect of an administration job for Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz. She's under fire for mismanaging an IT employee under a House IT investigation who was arrested on a seemingly unrelated mortgage fraud charge. Wasserman Schultz broke her public silence on Awan last week, portraying herself as the victim of 'right wing media' attacks rooted in anti-Muslim bigotry.

"Here's fellow Florida Democrat and DNC member Nikki Barnes saying what many others are saying privately: 'We wish she would go away and stop being so public by doubling down on negative stories ... None of this makes sense. It doesn't sound like racial profiling ... there must have been something for her This adds to Debbie being re-branded as the Democrats' disastrous destruction,' Barnes said. 'Those of us on the DNC know we have to rebrand ourselves and earn the people's trust. And unfortunately Debbie's name does not scream trust. It screams power. It screams limited access. It screams WikiLeaks now. DNC lawsuit. It screams a lot of negative things to the public. That's not how we want to rebrand ourselves.'" <http://politi.co/2vRpSGJ>

STRANGE STORY OF THE WEEK -- "Hearing loss of US diplomats in Cuba blamed on covert device," by AP's Matthew Lee in D.C. and Michael Weissenstein in Havana: "In the fall of 2016, a series of U.S. diplomats began suffering unexplained losses of hearing, according to officials with knowledge of the investigation into the case. Several of the diplomats were recent arrivals at the embassy, which reopened in 2015 as part of former President Barack Obama's reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

"Some of the diplomats' symptoms were so severe that they were forced to cancel their tours early and return to the United States, officials said. After months of investigation, U.S. officials concluded that the diplomats had been exposed to an advanced device that operated outside the range of audible sound and had been deployed either inside or outside their residences. It was not immediately clear if the device was a weapon used in a deliberate attack, or had some other purpose." <http://bit.ly/2wKAbsz>

-- DEPT. OF DIPLOMACY: "Trump friend Tom Barrack said to be in talks to become ambassador to Mexico," by Josh Dawsey: "Tom Barrack, a real estate investor and a close friend of President Donald Trump's, is in talks to become

ambassador to Mexico, according to three White House officials and advisers familiar with the matter. The high-profile post -- one of the most important in Trump's orbit, given his tense relationship with the country and his crackdown on immigration along the border -- has been the subject of intense talks within the administration ... Barrack, a gregarious billionaire, is the front-runner for the position but has expressed some concerns about taking it, one of the White House officials said. It is unclear whether he will end up accepting, 'but it is his if he wants it,' one of these people said."

<http://politi.co/2wwuT4u>

GET IT YET? -- BREITBART VS. MCMASTER -- "Exclusive - Zionist Organization of America Analysis Determines McMaster Hostile to Trump, Calls for Reassignment," by Matt Boyle. <http://bit.ly/2vHRQ7s>

ALEX ISENSTADT SCOOP -- "Top Trump donor ponies up to take out Flake," by Alex Isenstadt: "One of Donald Trump's most generous political benefactors is providing a six-figure donation to a super PAC devoted to unseating Sen. Jeff Flake, an Arizona Republican who has been fiercely critical of the president. Robert Mercer, a reclusive hedge fund billionaire who was intimately involved in Trump's rise and helped to bankroll his 2016 campaign, is contributing \$300,000 to a super PAC supporting former state Sen. Kelli Ward, who is challenging Flake in a Republican primary next year. It's the latest sign that Trump's political machine is preparing to take on Flake, whose persistent attacks have angered the president. The White House has met with Ward and two other Republicans who are mulling primary challenges to the Arizona senator, state Treasurer Jeff DeWit and former state GOP Chairman Robert Graham." <http://politi.co/2urDacO>

SCOOP - "Feds sought cooperation from Manafort's son-in-law," by Josh Dawsey and Darren Samuelsohn with Daniel Lippman: "Federal investigators sought cooperation from Paul Manafort's son-in-law in an effort to increase pressure on President Donald Trump's former campaign chairman, according to three people familiar with the probe. Investigators approached Jeffrey Yohai, who has partnered in business deals with Manafort, earlier this summer, setting off 'real waves' in Manafort's orbit, one of these people said.

"Another of these people said investigators are trying to get 'into Manafort's head.' Manafort, who is a focus of the broad federal and congressional investigations into Russian meddling in the 2016 presidential campaign, is also under investigation for his business and real estate transactions, including some that involve Yohai. ... It is unclear if investigators have secured cooperation from Yohai, who also hasn't been accused of wrongdoing. ... Mueller's targeting of both Manafort and his son-in-law over potential criminal wrongdoing is a familiar tactic in white-collar cases, commonly called 'climbing the ladder.'" <http://politi.co/2ustbzZ>

FOR TY COBB -- "Trump's Legal Team Is No Match for Mueller's: The president could learn from Bill and Hillary Clinton's years of litigation," by Bloomberg's Tom Schoenberg with Shannon Pettypiece: "As Mueller adds experienced prosecutors and broadens his investigation, Trump's legal team still appears disorganized and

understaffed. An army of well-paid lawyers would help the president get in front of the investigation: preparing responses to allegations before hearing about them from prosecutors or reporters, anticipating where Mueller is going, and developing a counternarrative to stymie him. ... Instead, Trump's defense has been almost entirely reactive-responding to the latest bombshell report with uninformed statements by surrogates. ...

"Bill and Hillary Clinton -- both Yale Law grads -- set up a war room on the top floor of the old executive office building next to the White House, where lawyers and staff would go through documents that needed to be turned over. Meetings were held several times a day, with lawyers shuttling between the White House, the executive building, and the offices of Skadden and Williams & Connolly a few blocks away. Dowd and Sekulow have offices less than a 10-minute walk from the White House, and at this point the legal team doesn't see any need to set up a Clinton-style war room. ... Trying to deal with Mueller without a high-powered legal operation 'is like going to a knife fight with a stick of butter in your hand,' says Nicholas Allard, a former Washington attorney who's now the dean of Brooklyn Law School. 'The team should reflect the importance of what's at stake, which is nothing less than the future of this presidency.'"

<https://bloom.bg/2hN5kcr>

TRUMP'S THURSDAY -- THE PRESIDENT is lunching with VP Mike Pence at Bedminster.

ERIC BOLLING SUES ... "Eric Bolling initiates lawsuit against reporter behind sexting story," by Hadas Gold: "On Wednesday, Bolling filed a 'summons with notice' in New York State Supreme Court against [Yashar] Ali, seeking \$50 million in damages for defamation. Ali must respond within 20 days, demanding that Bolling file a complaint, after which Bolling will have 20 days to file his response before the suit goes forward."

<http://politi.co/2wwwvDXy>

Playbook Reads

PHOTO DU JOUR: Cranes are seen on the south lawn of the White House as it undergoes renovations on August 9. | Mandel Ngan/AFP/Getty

IN THE SKIES -- "Unarmed Russian Air Force jet overflies the Pentagon, Capitol, CIA," by CNN's Jon Ostrower, Peter Morris and Noah Gray: "An unarmed Russian Air Force aircraft overflew the US Capitol, the Pentagon, Central Intelligence Agency and Joint Base Andrews at low altitude on Wednesday as part of a longstanding treaty that allows the militaries of the United States and Russia to observe the other from the air, according to two people familiar with the flight. The flight was part of the Treaty on Open Skies, which allows military aircraft from the United States and Russia and other nations

to fly aerial observation flights to observe military sites of the 34 signatory nations. The Russian Air Force Tupolev Tu-154 on Wednesday afternoon passed at around 3,700 feet over downtown Washington and Joint Base Andrews in Maryland, where Air Force One is based, according to tracking website Flightradar24.

"The jet is authorized to enter P-56, the highly secure airspace surrounding the White House. ... A second flight by the same jet [was] planned for between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. Wednesday, when the Russian jet [was scheduled to] overfly Bedminster, New Jersey, where President Donald Trump is vacationing ... A law enforcement source told CNN that the plane also overflowed Camp David, the presidential retreat in the Catoctin Mountains, the Trump National Golf Course in Virginia, and Mount Weather, one of the U.S. government's secret relocation bunkers. United States Air Force personnel were on the flight and the aircraft is capable of a variety of intelligence gathering."

<http://cnn.it/2vpKMtw>

THE 16-YEAR-OLD WAR -- "Trump's indecision on Afghanistan leaves generals in lurch," by Wesley Morgan: "U.S. and Afghan military commanders battling the Taliban and the Islamic State are encountering an obstacle they never expected, sources close to them say: months of indecision by President Donald Trump on whether to commit thousands of additional American troops. Instead of approving their plan for more troops as anticipated, the president has caught his generals off guard by questioning whether the 16-year-long effort to stabilize Afghanistan is still worth it, according to current and former military officials familiar with the conversations. ...

"Amid the uncertainty, the security situation on the ground continues to deteriorate. Deaths of Afghan security forces in the early months of 2017 were 'shockingly high,' the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction recently reported, continuing a years-long upward trend. The Afghan government 'controls or influences' only 60 percent of the country's 407 districts as of early this summer, down from 65 percent the same time last year, according to the U.S. military headquarters in Kabul."

<http://politi.co/2urJ4uc>

NETANYAHU'S STAND -- "Netanyahu Accuses 'the Left' and the Media of Trying to Oust Him," by NYT's Isabel Kershner in Jerusalem: "In Trumpian fashion, Mr. Netanyahu denounced the 'fake news media,' which he said had joined with 'the left' in what he called 'an obsessive and unprecedented witch hunt against me and my family, in order to carry out a coup.' The point, he said, was to press the law enforcement authorities to file charges, no matter what." <http://nyti.ms/2vpocRX>

***** **A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD):** Pharmacy benefit managers negotiate the lowest net price for prescriptions on behalf of employers and other health care purchasers; however, the list price - the important starting point for those negotiations -- continues to rise, at a rate of nearly ten percent in 2016 alone. Increased competition, faster reviews of generics and biosimilars and ending anti-competitive practices can also bring down the cost of medications for patients. Learn more at affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

MEDIAWATCH -- "United Nations Appoints Alison Smale of The New York Times to Top Post for Public Information," by NYT's Somini Sengupta: "The United Nations on Wednesday named Alison Smale, a veteran correspondent and editor at The New York Times, as its most senior official in charge of shaping the 193-member organization's global public image. As the next under secretary general for global communications, Ms. Smale, 62, will join the cabinet of the United Nations' top leader, Secretary General António Guterres, and be among a small circle of influential women around him. ... Ms. Smale, a British citizen, is currently The Times' bureau chief in Berlin. She had been the executive editor of The International Herald Tribune, based in Paris, for four years, before it was renamed The International New York Times in 2013." <http://nyti.ms/2hMgrSL>

--"Disney paying at least \$177 million to settle 'pink slime' lawsuit," by CNN's Tom Kludt: "In a footnote on the company's quarterly earnings report on Tuesday, Disney said it paid \$177 million that was 'incurred in connection with the settlement of litigation,' at least some of which was related to a years-long legal dispute with South Dakota-based meat processor Beef Products Inc. ... [A] lawyer for BPI told CNNMoney that its settlement was worth even more than \$177 million. ... Even just \$177 million would likely represent roughly a year's worth of advertising revenue for ABC's evening news program, a significant sum for the network and a sign of how damaging defamation suits can be for media outlets after the Hulk Hogan case sent Gawker into bankruptcy." <http://cnnmon.ie/2vQzXD0>

--"Google reveals sites with 'failing' ads, including Forbes, LA Times," by Digiday's Lucia Moses: "On June 1, Google rolled out its Ad Experience Report, a tool it's using to evaluate and score websites based on their ad creative and design. It provides screenshots and videos of ads that have been identified as annoying to users, such as pop-ups and autoplaying video ads with sound, and 'prestitial' ads with countdown timers.

"So far, Google has identified about 700 sites as warranting corrective action out of around 100,000 sites it's reviewed so far. Half of the roughly 700 got a 'failing' status and the other half a 'warning.' ... Those listed as failing include Forbes; Tronc-owned Orlando Sentinel, Sun-Sentinel and Los Angeles Times; Bauer Xcel Media's Life & Style and In Touch Weekly; The Wrap; Chicago Sun-Times; Tribune Broadcasting's Fox 13 Now; and Sporting News." <http://bit.ly/2vRCRIr>

--NANCY YOUSSEF is leaving BuzzFeed to cover intelligence for the Wall Street Journal later this month.

TV TONIGHT -- Tonight on "NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt," Lester Holt is sitting down with SNL's Colin Hanks and Michael Che ahead of Thursday's premiere of the summer edition of "Weekend Update." **1-min. video** <http://nbcnews.to/2voe9fy>

Playbookers



<http://bit.ly/2hN5dNF>

TRANSITIONS -- Jennie Westbrook Courts is joining Precision Strategies as a principal on the communications team. She was most recently at Subject Matter.

OBAMA ALUMNI -- Krish Vignarajah, who was policy director to former First Lady Michelle Obama, is entering the race for governor of Maryland. Before the Obama White House, Vignarajah, a lifelong Maryland resident, served as a senior adviser at the State Department under Secretaries Hillary Clinton and John Kerry.

WEST WING ARRIVAL LOUNGE -- Emily Mallon has started as executive assistant to chief of staff John Kelly. She previously was at DHS and worked on the transition

SUNDAY SO FAR -- "FOX NEWS SUNDAY": Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). Panel: Newt Gingrich, Donna Edwards, Tom Rogan and Marie Harf.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD - Liz Breckenridge, administrative director for Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.) and a Politico alum, and **Ken White**, senior counsel in the legal division at Office of Personnel Management, post on Instagram: "Ari [Benjamin] White joined our family [Wednesday]. He arrived a solid 7 lbs and 20 inches. Words cannot explain the love we have for him already." *Instapic* <http://bit.ly/2vRdiX5>

HAPPY 26th ANNIVERSARY to Tucker Carlson and Susie Andrews, celebrating in Portugal.

BIRTHDAY OF THE DAY: Nancy Cordes, CBS News congressional correspondent and the pride of Kalaheo, Hawaii. **How she got her start in journalism:** "I did an internship at the 'Today Show' the summer after my sophomore year of college, and from then on I was hooked. I came back to school in the fall and started anchoring at our college TV station. If anybody ever gets their hands on those Beta tapes, I'm ruined." *Read her Playbook Plus Q&A:* <http://politi.co/2hMonDz>

BIRTHDAYS: Andrew Sullivan is 54 ... Buffy Wicks, Clinton, Obama and Dean alum and candidate for CA Assembly District 15 (East Bay) (hat tips: Tim and Kiki Burger) ... Gina Ormand Cherwin (h/t Stella) ... 270 Strategies co-founder Meg Ansara, an HFA alum ... John Dunagan, SVP at VOX Global ... Matthew MacWilliams ... Sally Garner (h/ts Jon Haber) ... Alex Thompson, politics and policy editor at VICE News and an NYT alum ... Kevin McAllister, deputy comms director at American Bridge 21st Century, is 29 (h/t Dawn Le, filing in-transit to Netroots in Atlanta) ... Jim Brady, ESPN's public editor, is 5-0 ... Addison DiSesa ... Jessica Wehrman ... Paul Conway ... NYT's Laura Kim, a "Morning Joe" alum ... Sophie Vershbow, social media manager at Random House ... Sarah Kyle, director of federal gov't relations at BIO (h/t Ross Kyle) ... Chris Hansen, executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, is 35 ... Daniel Patrick Howard, the son of Ben, is 1 (h/t grandfather Jack) ...

... **Alex Marquardt**, CNN senior national correspondent ... Joshua Karp ... Chirag Shah, VP of gov't affairs for AAHOA (h/t Brandon VerVelde) ... Mike Linhorst ... BuzzFeed's Lissandra Villa ... Quorum's Kevin King ... Robert Cogan of the House Budget Committee, celebrating in Kennebunkport, Maine and Ipswich, Mass. (h/t Katie Byerly) ... Leila Clifford ... Julie Johnson ... Ally Harpootlian, media associate at ReThink Media ... Jayson Rodriguez ... Noah Marine is 33 ... Katie Papa ... Mark Walker ... Lucy Wolfe Goss ... Emily Buck ... Cameron Onumah ... Rick Phelps ... George Appleby ... Benjamin Giesser (h/ts Teresa Vilmain) ... Vanessa Reed ... Rose Gallagher ... Johannah Tyer ... Sam Wilson is 35 ... Paul Foutch ... Antonio Banderas is 57 (h/t AP)

******* A message from the Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs (CAPD) :**

The high prices that drug makers set for prescription drugs can put financial strain on patients, employers, unions and others who provide health care coverage to more than 50 percent of Americans. Pharmacy benefit managers negotiate the lowest net price for prescriptions on behalf of employers, unions and government programs. But, as list prices - the starting point for those negotiations -- continue their nearly double-digit increases, the effects ripple throughout the system. The key to ensuring greater access and affordability lies in fostering greater competition. Facilitating faster reviews of generics and biosimilars, identifying off-patent drugs with little or no generic competition, and ending anti-competitive practices that keep safe, effective alternatives out of the market are also key to abating rising drug costs for patients. Learn more at

affordableprescriptiondrugs.org *****

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