

relish. The senator's thorny position - a Republican lawmaker investigating the Republican president, whom he embraced last year on the campaign trail in his own re-election bid - has grown more trying by the day. ...

"Mr. Burr's distaste for the news media is well known at the Capitol. On at least one occasion, he climbed out of an office window to avoid reporters, while carrying his dry cleaning, according to a senior Republican aide who has spoken to him about the episode. 'It was further than I thought,' Mr. Burr remembered of the descent, according to the aide. He now occupies a second-floor space in the Russell Senate Office Building. It is not clear precisely how or why he chose to take this escape route -- or, in fact, if this was the office in question. 'I understand from him that he did jump out a window once with his dry cleaning,' a Burr spokeswoman, Becca Glover, said in an email, 'but I don't know the circumstances.'" <http://nyti.ms/2pJLIoN>

CHASER on A1 of the BOSTON GLOBE (above the fold) -- "Democrats lack strong voice amid Trump's Russia investigation meltdown," by Annie Linskey and Matt Viser: "News broke by the second. The nightly TV upended programming. The White House press secretary briefed reporters in the dark by the West Wing shrubbery. Russian photographers outwitted the White House and ended up filing dispatches from the Oval Office.

"In a string of tumultuous weeks in the Trump administration, the week that FBI Director James Comey was fired by the president of the United States for investigating his own campaign was by far the most bizarre and, for many, the most alarming.

"As the White House swirled with conflicting narratives on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, Democrats, who are in the minority in both chambers of Congress, tried to focus their fury and marshal all their muscle. The result? The party's Senate leaders invoked an obscure parliamentary rule that bars committee meetings after the Senate has been in session for two hours - unless all 100 senators agree. It meant several hearings were postponed. That'll show 'em." <http://bit.ly/2qjIGd3>

******* A message from PhRMA: You don't always pay full price for doctor or hospital visits. So why is a visit to the pharmacy different?** Robust negotiations between biopharmaceutical companies and insurers often result in significant rebates and discounts. In fact, more than a third of the list price for brand medicines is rebated back to payers and the supply chain. Yet, unlike care received at an in-network hospital or physician's office, patients with high deductibles or coinsurance pay cost sharing

based on the list price of a medicine, even if their insurer receives a steep discount. Insurers should share more of the rebates they receive with patients. Learn more at <http://onphr.ma/2pdaE7m>. *****

BEN SCHRECKINGER in POLITICO Magazine, "The Widening Blast Radius of the Fox News Scandal: The metastasizing Ailes affair is spilling over into the politics of New York, Virginia and the White House": "Beyond the rough-and-tumble of New York politics and media, [Andrea] Tantaros' suit also drags the more genteel, blazer-and-khakis world of northern Virginia's establishment Republican politics into the Fox News fray. In the suit, Tantaros ... claims that operatives working on behalf of Fox hacked her computer and eavesdropped on her phone calls and then used private information to harass and intimidate her over social media. Much of her complaint revolves around allegations against former Fox contributor Pete Snyder, an investor and aspiring Republican politician in Virginia, where he unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor in 2013. ... Snyder [has] retained the high-powered public relations specialist Stephanie Cutter ... to handle media inquiries related to the suit. ...

"The network of operatives allegedly used by Ailes and other Fox executives to monitor and demean perceived threats also extends to Trump's inner circle, according to several people with knowledge of those relationships. Trump's longtime confidant Stone, a veteran practitioner of political dark arts, was paid for off-air work that included keeping tabs on [Gabe] Sherman and publicly criticizing Newsmax CEO Chris Ruddy ... [Ailes] had become 'obsessed' with Ruddy and the possibility that his plans to launch Newsmax TV would present a threat to Fox's conservative news hegemony."

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

MEGATRENDS -- "How Google Took Over the Classroom: The tech giant is transforming public education with low-cost laptops and free apps. But schools may be giving Google more than they are getting," by NYT's Natasha Singer: "In the space of just five years, Google has helped upend the sales methods companies use to place their products in classrooms. It has enlisted teachers and administrators to promote Google's products to other schools. It has directly reached out to educators to test its products -- effectively bypassing senior district officials.

"And it has outmaneuvered Apple and Microsoft with a powerful combination of low-cost laptops, called Chromebooks, and free classroom apps. Today, more than half the nation's primary- and secondary-school students - more than 30 million children -