

Times Digest

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THE MARKETS

DJIA	NASDAQ	S&P 500
↑ 111.32	↑ 18.86	↑ 14.12
1.09%	0.87%	1.30%
10,296.85	2,190.06	1,103.31

EUROPE

BRITAIN	GERMANY	FRANCE
FTSE 100	DAX	CAC 40
↑ 35.90	↑ 55.18	↑ 50.12
0.68%	0.98%	1.33%
5,283.31	5,709.77	3,812.13

ASIA/PACIFIC

JAPAN	HONG KONG	CHINA
NIKKEI 225	HANG SENG	SHANGHAI
166.07	28.43	6.65
↑ 1.63%	↑ 0.14%	↓ 0.23%
10,371.09	20,272.18	2,934.71

AMERICAS

CANADA	BRAZIL	MEXICO
TSX	BOVESPA	BOLSA
90.79	591.47	
↑ 0.80%	↑ 0.89%	Markets closed for holiday.
11,408.34	67,163.20	

An Attitude Adjustment Pushes Wall St. Higher

Investors rallied Tuesday behind signs of stability in the housing sector, lifting the stock market for a second day.

A fresh round of earnings reports brought optimism. Traders seemed to abandon their habit of shrugging off even the most stellar financial news and responded warmly to positive reports from a range of companies, including Ford and Lexmark.

Gains in the industrial and health care sectors helped give stocks their largest two-day increase in nearly three months. Analysts, however, cautioned that volatility was still a concern. In recent weeks, stocks have at moments teetered on the brink of a steep decline, only to begin the next day riding high again.

"This is still very cloudy water," said Marc Harris, head of global research for RBC Capital Markets. "We know the direction of this market — we expect it to increase 6 to 8 percent this year — but we don't know how quickly and how consistently we are going to get there."
(NYT)

Defense Leaders Seek to End 'Don't Ask'

WASHINGTON — The nation's top two defense officials called Tuesday for an end to the 16-year-old "don't ask, don't tell" law, a major step toward allowing openly gay men and women to serve in the U.S. military for the first time in its history.

"No matter how I look at the issue, I cannot escape being troubled by the fact that we have in place a policy which forces young men and women to lie about who they are in order to defend their fellow citizens," Adm. Mike Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. He said it was his personal belief that "allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly would be the right thing to do."

But both Mullen and Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates told the committee they needed more time to review how to carry out the change in policy, which requires an act of Congress, and predicted some disruption to the armed forces.

Mullen is the first sitting chairman of the Joint Chiefs to support

the repeal of the policy. In 1993, Gen. Colin L. Powell, the chairman at the time, opposed allowing gay men and lesbians to serve openly, but supported "don't ask, don't tell" as the compromise passed by Congress. Under the policy, gay men and lesbians may serve as long as they keep their sexual orientation secret.

Pentagon officials said the review of the issue could take up to a year. In the interim, Gates announced that the military was moving toward enforcing the existing policy "in a fairer manner" — a reference to the possibility that the Pentagon would no longer take action to discharge service members whose sexual orientation is revealed by third parties or jilted partners, one of the law's most onerous aspects.

As the hearing opened, the committee's chairman, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., welcomed the abolition of the policy, saying it had never made sense to him. Its ranking Republican, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, said that he was "deeply disappointed" and that the original rationale was as

sound as ever.

On one thing, they agreed: many gay men and lesbians are serving honorably and effectively in the military, despite a policy that has driven thousands of others out of the services. But Levin said the military should act in this matter as it has in others, as a force against discrimination. And McCain said military culture was so different from civilian life that the rules for its members must differ.

Gates and Mullen were responding to President Obama's campaign pledge to end "don't ask, don't tell," which the president, after a year of saying little about it, reaffirmed in his State of the Union address last week.

"The question before us is not whether the military prepares to make this change, but how we best prepare for it," Gates told the committee. "We have received our orders from the commander in chief and we are moving out accordingly. However, we also can only take this process so far as the ultimate decision rests with you, the Congress."

ELISABETH BUMILLER

Slowly, Food Distribution in Haiti Improves

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Four days into a new food distribution program from the United Nations that aims to repair a faltering aid effort, paper coupons that can be redeemed for 55 pounds of rice have become more valuable than Haitian money.

For three weeks since the Jan. 12 earthquake, the international effort to feed millions of Haitians has been dogged by confusion, transportation snags, security problems and a lack of coordination. Before the coupon program started Saturday, food giveaways had become a Darwinian sport — with bottles of canola oil or biscuits thrown like footballs from the backs of trucks to masses of men jockeying for position.

Many are still hungry. As of Sunday, 639,200 people had received a meal from the U.N. World Food Program, 32 percent of the 2 million in need.

In many ways, the new food program is an improvement, with its stepped-up security and its plan for 16 fixed distribution locations. It shifts power from the government to foreign aid groups; and from men on trucks to local leaders like Rigaud Joachin, 48, a gregarious bookkeeper with the national telecom company.

He was responsible on Sunday for handing out 300 coupons to a list of families. Before long, the crowd was 15 people wide and three deep. But Joachin, a respected neighborhood figure, had

little trouble keeping order.

Other locations, however, have had a harder time. At a park in Pétionville on Monday, the food arrived late, after thousands without coupons had already gathered. Brian Casey, an emergency coordinator with GOAL, an Irish aid group, said there was a problem obtaining fuel.

Meanwhile, theft occurred almost openly. Partly because workers were trying to move quickly, off-duty police officers slid in to collect what they had no right to take. "I'll make a note of it," said a U.N. police officer who had pulled one of the men aside. "But he's a policeman so nothing will happen."
DAMIEN CAVE and GINGER THOMPSON

ONLINE: MORE PRICES AND ANALYSIS

Information on all United States stocks, plus bonds, mutual funds, commodities and foreign stocks along with analysis of industry sectors and stock indexes: nytimes.com/markets

In Guinea, Brutality Set Stage for Surprising Calm

CONAKRY, Guinea — Something rare has happened in a region often given to brutal autocracy: power has been peacefully transferred to a civilian, just four months after an army massacre that recalled the worst of Africa's past.

On Sept. 28, at least 150 demonstrators died in this city's main stadium, and dozens were raped or beaten, including the man who is now prime minister.

Now the swift, unexpected turn has Guineans wondering if the new prime minister, Jean-Marie Doré, a gaunt and wily opposition leader who left the stadium bleeding, can actually deliver democracy in a country that has never truly known it. The omnipresent military, arbiter of power for decades, hovers in the background.

"Things have happened so fast," said Sydia Touré, a respected opposition leader. "This is something we couldn't have imagined two months ago. It's a new vision."

It was, bitterly to Guineans, the

massacre that may have finally unchained this long-repressed country. An unusual series of events followed: the grave wounding in December of the country's military dictator, Capt. Moussa Dadis Camara, in an assassination attempt; then the apparent acquiescence by his second-in-command, Gen. Sékouba Konaté, to switch to civilian leadership; and finally the scene of hope last week when Doré took power and promised the nation's first truly free elections within the year.

Guinea could be the rare case in which swift international sanctions actually worked, politicians and diplomats here say. Sharp words from the United States and France last October were quickly followed by travel and aid bans, striking hard in an impoverished land where over half the budget is financed from abroad.

The United Nations and the International Criminal Court, investigating the stadium massacre, fingered the junta — including Ca-

mara, its erratic chief — for crimes against humanity.

"We now know to what degree the international community is allergic to violations of human rights in general, and unpunished massacres in particular," Doré said in an interview last week.

All the promise and risk of Guinea's democratic experiment were evident last week at a meeting of former opposition members. "People have died for this," said an opposition spokesman, François Lonsény Fall, an ex-prime minister. "We have a historic mission to give our country, for the first time, democratic institutions."

That will not be easy in a nation that has seen one dictator replace another in the 52 years since its separation from France. Hope was tempered by wariness at the meeting. "There's a new momentum that is promising, but it must be well-managed," said Mouctar Diallo, president of an opposition party. "We are optimistic but vigilant." ADAM NOSSITER

In Brief

Obama Pushes Business Loan Plan

Intensifying his focus on job creation, President Obama on Tuesday promoted his plan to free up \$30 billion in lending for small businesses. He toured a lighting manufacturer in Nashua, N.H., and then attended a town hall meeting to tout his lending proposal, which would require Congressional approval.

The plan would redirect \$30 billion in repaid bailout loans from the Troubled Asset Relief Program to a new Small Business Lending Fund.

In Washington, a leading Senate Republican complained that the proposal would only add to sky-high deficits. "You're adding to the debt that our kids are going to have to pay back," Judd Gregg, R-N.H., said. (NYT)

Attacks in Pakistan

In another exceptionally heavy barrage, eight American drones fired at least 17 missiles on Tuesday at suspected militants in Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan, Pakistani security officials and residents said. The targets were compounds and militants' positions west of Miram Shah, the capital of North Waziristan. At least 10 people were killed and the death toll could still rise significantly, residents and officials said.

Drone attacks have intensified since a Dec. 30 suicide bombing of a C.I.A. base in Khost, Afghanistan, which borders North Waziristan. (NYT)

Hong Kong Estate

A judge in Hong Kong ruled Tuesday that the estate of the billionaire Nina Wang will not go to her feng shui master, Tony Chan, who also claimed to have been her lover. Justice Johnson Lam ruled instead that Wang, who died of cancer in 2007 at 69, intended to leave her estate to her charity, the Chinachem Charitable Foundation, under a will she drew up in 2002.

Lam also invalidated a 2006 will, saying her signature had been forged. It would have given Wang's entire fortune to Chan, 50. Estimates of the estate range from \$4 billion to nearly \$13 billion. (NYT)

Opposition Leader Toughens Line on Iranian Leaders

Mir Hussein Moussavi, the Iranian opposition leader, made some of his harshest remarks to date against Iran's rulers on Tuesday in an interview published on his Web site, calling their behavior dictatorial and terrifying.

The remarks by Moussavi, whom supporters regard as the real winner of Iran's contested presidential elections last June, appeared to be part of a broader opposition effort to counter an intensified crackdown by the government ahead of the Feb. 11 anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Moussavi's remarks came as the government announced that

nine imprisoned antigovernment protesters would soon be hanged. Two were hanged last week.

In the interview, Moussavi said the executions were aimed at "terrifying people" into submission.

"The majority of people believed in the beginning of the revolution that the roots of dictatorship and despotism were abolished," he said. "I was one of them but now I don't have the same beliefs. You can still find the elements and roots that lead to dictatorship."

Moussavi served as prime minister in the first eight years after the revolution. He and another opposition leader, Mehdi Karroubi, ran against President Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad in June. The government declared Ahmadinejad the winner by a lopsided margin, leading to accusations of fraud. Those accusations led to widespread protests, brutal repression and the worst political crisis in Iran since the revolution.

Moussavi said he did not believe the revolution had achieved its goals. Still, he tempered his remarks by saying the Constitution written after the 1979 revolution should remain the centerpiece of the opposition movement. "We need to move within an order to avoid violations that could impose further costs on people," he said. NAZILA FATHI

Preflight Error Had a Role in Buffalo Crash, Agency Says

WASHINGTON — A key ingredient of a crash last Feb. 12 that killed 49 people on a plane on approach to the Buffalo airport, and one more on the ground, was an error made by the flight crew at Newark before takeoff, the staff of the National Transportation Safety Board said Tuesday.

The captain and the first officer, who have already been faulted for chatting during the flight, entered contradictory information into

cockpit computers, the staff said.

With icing possible that night, the captain, Marvin Renslow, 47, pushed a button designed to help protect the plane by priming a low-speed warning system to alert early, at a higher speed than usual. This is because ice on the wings requires a plane to fly faster.

But the first officer, Rebecca L. Shaw, 24, set a separate program using ordinary speeds. Shaw has also been criticized for sending

text messages before takeoff, possibly distracting her.

Soon after, as the plane slowed for landing, the speed warning system went off at a point it normally would have, and Renslow reacted improperly. He pushed the throttle forward for more power, but not far enough, then pulled back on the control column, forcing the nose into the air — the opposite of what he should have done. MATTHEW L. WALD

Toyota's Sales Fall as G.M. and Ford Gain China Is Becoming Hotbed for I.P.O.'s

DETROIT — Toyota Motor said Tuesday that its U.S. sales fell 16 percent in January as it recalled millions of vehicles and temporarily stopped selling some of its most popular models.

Sales of the Toyota Camry sedan, one of eight models for which sales and production were suspended, declined 24 percent. Sales of a larger sedan, the Avalon, fell 55 percent. Over all, sales of the eight affected models were 21 percent lower than in January 2009.

As a result, Toyota was easily outsold by the Ford Motor Co., whose sales increased 25 percent. Ford, which ranked behind Toyota in 2009 sales, said it sold 43 percent more passenger cars than a year ago and estimated that its market share increased 2 percentage points, to 16 percent.

General Motors said its sales increased 14 percent, while Chrysler's decreased 8 percent. Honda's sales fell 5 percent, while Nissan's increased 16 percent.

Ford, G.M. and Chrysler are hoping to gain ground at the expense of Toyota — the reverse of what they have been experiencing for decades — by offering \$1,000 discounts to buyers who trade in a Toyota vehicle through February. Hyundai offered a similar deal, which ended Monday.

George Pipas, Ford's chief sales analyst, said the Toyota recalls did not significantly affect Ford's sales in the last week of January. "Just a week into this announcement, it's very hard to predict what's going to happen," he said.

The vehicles are being recalled because Toyota said their accelerator pedals can become worn

and difficult to operate or stick in a partially depressed position. The company has been plagued by reports from drivers who said their vehicles accelerated unintentionally, in some cases causing crashes and injuries or deaths.

Besides the Toyota recalls, Ford and other automakers reported sales increases for January because fleet operators ordered thousands more vehicles than they did a year ago. Ford said its fleet sales jumped 154 percent.

Toyota said dealers would begin making repairs by this weekend and sales of the recalled models could resume after they had been fixed, but vehicles that already had been sold were a priority. Almost 4.5 million vehicles globally are covered by the pedal recall, including 2.3 million in the United States. **NICK BUNKLEY**

China Is Becoming Hotbed for I.P.O.'s

SHANGHAI — Last April, when global financial markets were melting down, a Chinese Web site named Sohu.com made a bold move to spin off its online gaming unit and list it on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

The bet paid off: Changyou.com, the gaming company, became one of the year's hottest I.P.O.'s, triggering a flurry of Chinese stock offerings that raised over \$55 billion and turned China into the world's No. 1 source of companies going public.

With that kind of money up for grabs, Wall Street firms suffering one of their worst dry spells ever for I.P.O.'s are scrambling for business from China, despite the risks that come with buying shares of Chinese firms and growing concerns about a bubble in Chinese listings.

The New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq, which saw the number of I.P.O.'s wither last year from hundreds a decade ago, are stepping up plans to lure even more Chinese listings to the United States, hoping to siphon them away from exchanges in Hong Kong and Shanghai.

"Last quarter was one of the busiest quarters in years," Robert H. McCooney Jr., the head of new listings at Nasdaq, said of Chinese listings. "And my sense is we'll have another strong year this year."

Global private equity firms, Silicon Valley venture capitalists, New York hedge fund managers and others are forming joint ventures with the Chinese government or finding other means to vie for a piece of what the legendary investor Wilbur L. Ross calls "the China miracle."

In the past five years, Chinese firms have raised \$210 billion through initial public offerings. American companies, by contrast, have raised \$184 billion, according to Dealogic, which tracks global I.P.O.'s.

The global economic crisis sharply cut the number of new listings around the world last year. As the recession ebbs, investors are betting that the market for I.P.O.'s in the United States, Europe and Latin America will rebound smartly this year. But no country is likely to produce more lucrative listings than China, where hundreds of companies are expected to raise tens of billions of dollars going public in 2010.

"A fund manager with a global portfolio is being reckless if he doesn't have exposure to China," says Mark Machin, co-head of Asian investment banking at Goldman Sachs. **DAVID BARBOZA**

German Companies Pull Out of Iran, Gradually

BERLIN — German companies, long Iran's biggest trading partners in Europe, are finding it increasingly difficult to do business there as the United States, Israel and others campaign for tougher U.N. sanctions in response to the country's nuclear program.

Yet even those companies that said they were pulling out — most notably Siemens last week — will most likely take years to wind down operations and wrap up outstanding contracts.

Others are simply lowering their profile or finding third countries to do business through, fearing they will lose a lucrative market forever if they abandon it now.

Although no precise numbers

are available, interviews with company executives, trade associations and export guarantee agencies suggest a significant reduction of direct trade between Germany and Iran.

One of the biggest changes is that Iranian companies seeking to import from German companies can no longer receive credit guarantees for 7 to 10 years, which used to be normal for big infrastructure projects.

Now they have to pay within 360 days, said Ruth Bartonek, a spokeswoman for Euler Hermes, the agency that manages the German government's export credit guarantees. The change was made over the last two years as a result of political pressure from the United States.

some defendants in the case.

In its own letter, the U.S. Attorney's office said it had inadvertently sent the S.E.C. the wiretap information and rejected claims that it was trying to hide the disclosure from others in the case.

Lawyers for the S.E.C. said they had not listened to the wiretapped conversations before Jan. 26, when a lawyer for Zvi Goffer, one of the defendants, questioned whether the agency was in possession of the wiretaps.

The S.E.C. then notified the U.S.

As a result, credit guarantees for Iran in 2008 — the latest figure available — amounted to 133 million euros (\$186 million), compared with 503 million euros in 2007. In 2005, they were 1.4 billion euros.

Germany remains Iran's biggest trading partner in Europe, although the market is small. German exports to Iran in 2008 amounted to nearly 4 billion euros, or less than 1 percent of total German exports. That was down slightly from 4.4 billion euros in 2005.

China is Iran's largest trading partner, responsible for about 14 percent of its imports and exports in 2008. Beijing has resisted renewed calls for expanded sanctions on Iran. **JUDY DEMPSEY**

attorney's office, which said the inclusion of the wiretap evidence was "unintentional and inadvertent." The S.E.C. also said it had returned the 10 CDs containing the recordings to federal prosecutors.

But Goffer's lawyer, Cynthia Monaco, requested in a letter that the court hold a hearing on the unauthorized disclosure, suggesting that she planned to use it as an argument to suppress the evidence in the case.

ZACHERY KOUWE

S.E.C. Admits It Received Wiretaps in Galleon Insider Case

The Securities and Exchange Commission has conceded in court filings that federal prosecutors mistakenly sent the agency confidential wiretap information from the criminal insider-trading case against Galleon Group's founder, Raj Rajaratnam.

The S.E.C. said in its filing that in December it received a limited number of wiretap communications from the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York, as part of a large batch of documents made available to

Some News Sites Ready to Charge Online Readers

In Brief

Extracting payment from online readers has been called everything from the next great folly of print journalism to its salvation, but to get a glimpse of how it really looks, head to Lancaster, Pa.

Specifically, head to the offices of The Intelligencer Journal-Lancaster New Era, one of the first handful of news outlets to acknowledge that it intends to start using a software system developed by the entrepreneurs Steven Brill, L. Gordon Crovitz and their partners, which they are calling Press+. Others interested include The Fayetteville Observer in North Carolina and Global Post, an Internet site based in Boston.

A very small number of news organizations, including The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times and Newsday, already charge online readers, each with a system developed largely in-house, and The New York Times has announced that it plans to do the same. But with advertising plummeting, many other publishers

are considering making the switch, despite the risk of losing audience and advertising.

Last year, Brill and company seized on that interest, founding their operation, Journalism Online, with the aim of developing a system that would become the industry standard, and keeping 20 percent of clients' online revenue as their fee. They say they have worked with potential clients from around the world who operate more than 1,300 news sites.

If Lancaster turns out to be in the vanguard of a mass movement — and skeptics say charging could be a short-lived experiment — then Press+ could be the industry's Pied Piper.

But Crovitz and Brill cautioned against high expectations. It will take years before charging Internet users significantly changes the economics of a deeply troubled industry, they said.

As newsprint becomes a smaller part of the business, "you want to establish the notion that it's worth something online," Brill

said. "What we have convinced people of is they don't have to make a drastic decision. You can experiment."

For those who have signed on, such lowered expectations are part of the appeal. "We're starting small, so if this really turns people off, we're not playing with a huge chunk of our readership," said Ernest J. Schreiber, editor of the Lancaster paper's Web site, LancasterOnline.com.

At the outset, in a month or two, the paper will charge only readers outside its immediate area and only for reading obituaries. It will allow a reader to see a certain number of obituaries free before a box pops onto the screen demanding a flat fee to keep reading, but the paper has not yet decided what that number will be or how much it will charge.

The system may generate only a few hundred thousand dollars a year in revenue, he said, but "that's enough to pay for a few reporters."

RICHARD PÉREZ-PEÑA

Housing Index Gains

The number of people preparing to buy a home rose slightly in December, a sign that home sales could be stabilizing heading into the spring buying season.

The National Association of Realtors said Tuesday that its seasonally adjusted index of sales agreements in December rose 1 percent from November, to 96.6 points. That was a little lower than the 97.1 level analysts expected, according to Thomson Reuters. The index has risen for 9 of the last 10 months as buyers took advantage of an \$8,000 first-time homebuyer tax credit before its scheduled expiration Nov. 30. Congress has extended the credit to April 30. (AP)

BP's Profits Slip

BP, the British oil company, reported a \$4.3 billion fourth-quarter profit on Tuesday and said its production had outpaced expectations in 2009. The profit in the October-December period compares favorably with a year earlier, when the oil price collapsed at the height of the financial crisis, leaving BP with a \$3.3 billion loss. But the latest results marked a decline from the \$5.3 billion BP posted in the third quarter of 2009. (NYT)

Australian Rate Stable

The Australian central bank unexpectedly kept its key interest rate unchanged on Tuesday, pausing in its series of rate increases that began in October. Analysts had widely expected the Reserve Bank of Australia to announce another small increase as it seeks to curb inflation. Australia's rapid economic rebound has contrasted starkly with the still-temperid recovery in other developed nations. (NYT)

Britain Will Not Pursue Legal Action Against Madoff

Britain's Serious Fraud Office said Tuesday that it would not pursue legal action against the British operations of Bernard L. Madoff, the ex-financier now in prison in the United States for operating a vast Ponzi scheme.

The agency said in a statement that its investigation had found "insufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction" against either the company or its directors.

The British arm of Madoff's investment empire was Madoff Securities International Limited, based in a small office in the exclusive London neighborhood of Mayfair.

Madoff Securities International was a separate legal entity with a staff of 28 people, including 14 traders. According to public filings, the unit had £100 million, or \$1.42 billion, in assets and a £2 million profit in 2007.

It was far removed in size and business scope from the New York headquarters of Madoff's trading and fund management operations.

In June, Madoff was sentenced to 150 years in prison for masterminding the largest Ponzi scheme

in history.

Britain's Serious Fraud Office, which investigates financial crime, had been investigating Madoff's business activities since late 2008. The agency announced in March 2009 that Madoff's London office had played a large part in his sweeping Ponzi scheme.

In its statement on Tuesday, the office said that it would continue "to provide assistance to international partners in law enforcement on aspects of the continuing worldwide investigation and is continuing its own inquiries into wider aspects of the fraud which may give rise" to charges in Britain.

MATTHEW SALTMARSH

Economix

A corporation says it will run for Congress.

nytimes.com/economix

WEATHER

High/low temperatures for the 21 hours ended at 4 p.m. yesterday, Eastern time, and precipitation (in inches) for the 18 hours ended at 1 p.m. yesterday. Expected conditions for today and tomorrow.

Weather conditions: C-clouds, F-fog, H-haze, I-ice, PC-partly cloudy, R-rain, S-sun, Sh-showers, Sn-snow, SS-snow showers, T-thunderstorms, Tr-trace, W-windy.

U.S. CITIES

	Yesterday	Today	Tomorrow
Atlanta	53/39 0	50/33 PC	58/36 S
Baltimore	34/19 0	37/28 Sn	41/26 PC

Boston	35/24 0	32/25 PC	32/24 SS	New York City	35/27 0	36/30 C	39/28 SS
Charlotte	48/34 0	39/27 Sn	52/30 S	Orlando	62/62 0.45	74/50 T	70/54 S
Chicago	30/27 0	33/23 Sn	32/21 S	Philadelphia	36/22 0	36/29 PC	40/26 PC
Cleveland	29/20 0	34/23 Sn	36/24 C	Phoenix	67/50 0	68/52 C	66/50 Sh
Dallas-Ft. Worth	46/40 0	55/36 C	46/39 R	Pittsburgh	31/18 0	36/27 SS	38/23 SS
Denver	47/16 0	49/19 S	46/20 S	Portland, Ore.	45/39 0.14	52/41 C	50/38 C
Detroit	28/19 0	32/23 Sn	34/22 C	Raleigh	48/29 0	40/30 I	50/27 S
Hartford	34/16 0	35/20 PC	36/20 SS	Sacramento	60/41 0	57/45 Sh	57/43 Sh
Houston	49/48 0.01	59/49 C	53/47 R	San Diego	63/51 0	61/54 C	62/53 PC
Indianapolis	37/31 0	42/26 Sn	38/25 PC	San Francisco	58/46 0	57/48 C	58/47 C
Los Angeles	68/52 0	64/52 PC	62/50 PC	Seattle	49/40 0.02	51/40 C	49/38 C
Miami	75/69 2.85	82/60 T	76/66 S	St. Louis	39/33 0	41/22 C	40/29 S
Mpls.-St. Paul	16/14 0.05	22/7 Sn	27/17 S	Tampa	63/62 0.05	68/51 Sh	70/53 S
Nashville	43/34 0	48/28 Sh	46/29 S	Washington	39/27 0	39/30 Sn	42/28 PC

In Vancouver, the Culinary Competitors

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — As breakfasts go, it's not much to look at, just a plastic container of maple-glazed smoked salmon bits with a sourdough roll. Eaten here on a dock, though, is to experience the sublime. Above the skyline, mountains rise into a darkening sky as ferryboats chug past. Gulls come close, beg for scraps. They won't get any.

Vancouver is a terrific place to eat, diverse and exciting. But a simple breakfast outside the Granville Island Public Market is an important stop for any food pilgrim. I was on the dock in January, an advance man for the more than two million people expected to descend on Vancouver for the Winter Olympics from Feb. 12 to 28.

The most ravenous visitors will begin their culinary tour almost from the moment they land at Vancouver International Airport on Sea Island in suburban Richmond, home of a vast Asian enclave. Here dim sum palaces are thriving, along with strip-mall noodle huts and Chinese supermarkets, tea parlors and barbecue dives.

Evenings here offer an opportunity to eat up and down the economic scale, from expensive hotel dining rooms to restaurants that highlight Vancouver's sense of place. Chief among them, probably, is Refuel, which until last year was Fuel, a Momofuku Ko-like experience of punk-rock locavore



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIM STALLKNECHT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

FORGET SPORTS. LET'S EAT A specialty at Sun Sui Wah in Vancouver is giant king crab. Left, Refuel serves crunchy scrapple terrine topped with a fried egg.

cooking amid Riedel glassware. The chef, Robert Belcham, reconfigured the menu with lower prices and a more casual vibe. From his hands comes a plate of crunchy scrapple terrine topped with fried egg.

Come morning, dim sum is in many residents' plans. The giant Sun Sui Wah Seafood Restaurant at the base of the downtown pen-

insula features tanks of seafood, most notably filled with giant Alaskan king crabs. You can have these chopped and fried, along with the restaurant's signature dish, a luscious deep-fried squab.

When you leave town there will be lines at the airport, where many will be eating sandwiches from Tim Horton's. No medals for them. **SAM SIFTON**

By Playing It Safe, Will Pinot Gris Makers Be Sorry?

Oregon pinot gris is a stealth wine. Few crave it or give it much thought. Yet on the occasions when I spot it on an otherwise unfriendly wine list, I am relieved to have found a somewhat safe haven.

The producers of Oregon pinot gris seem to lack ambition for their wine, which is not necessarily a bad thing. The usual trappings — heavy texture, pronounced oak flavors, too much sweetness and the like — are mostly absent, and prices are fairly moderate.

Yet, after a recent tasting of Oregon pinot gris from the 2008 and 2007 vintages, I have to wonder whether the apparent lack of am-

bition on the part of producers has cut into the value of these wines.

The best of these wines have a lively vitality that makes them refreshing, yet they have another dimension as well. The good ones have a stony mineral quality that I especially appreciate in white wines, along with herb and spice flavors rather than overt fruitiness. But I was surprised by how many of the wines we tasted lacked zest.

While some of the wines disappointed us, we also liked quite a few. Our consensus No. 1 bottle was the 2008 Willamette Valley from Anne Amie, which had all the vitality one could want, along with complex herbal, spice and mineral flavors. At \$19, it was a good value.

Our other top wine was the 2008 King Estate Signature Collection (\$17). King is one of the larger Or-

egon producers, but it turns out attractive, well-made, reasonably priced bottles like this one, which was dry and energetic, with fresh fruit, herb and mineral flavors and an attractive, oily texture.

Our best value and No. 3 wine was the 2008 Bethel Heights (\$14), which, like the King Estate, was richly textured. It also had pretty peach, herb and mineral flavors.

Of the 20 wines we tasted, 19 were labeled pinot gris. One, the 2008 Rock Point, No. 7 on our list, is called pinot grigio, after the Italian version of this grape. Pinot gris was once the only legal name for Oregon wines made from this grape, but that law was changed in 2007. Pinot grigio from northern Italy can be a delicious wine of character, but too often it is dull. Let's hope Oregon pinot gris does not end up settling for the pinot grigio standard. **ERICASIMOV**

For the Big Game? Pigskin, of Course

Before we return to the regularly scheduled cooking portion of our program, it is important to note that pigskins were never used to make American footballs.

The term comes from an archaic English form of the sport. The basic idea was to move an inflated pig's bladder between neighboring villages. But sportswriters and fantasy football fans still like to call the ball a pigskin. And in the age of nose-to-tail eating, cooking pigskin for the Super Bowl party — in the form of crisp, fennel-scented porchetta or a Cajun cracklin — makes as much sense as another bowl of guacamole.

"It's just fat and salt and crunch," said Lester Ayala, a cook from Connecticut who dropped into Porchetta in the East Village last month to try a sandwich with a good ratio of soft, lean pork to fatty, crispy skin. "What's better than that?"

In the kitchen, though, pork skin can be an ornery ingredient. The chef Sara Jenkins, who runs Porchetta, says the trick is a special oven and good pork. She uses the middle sections of Niman Ranch pigs at a rate of about 20 a week, making sure the skin looks clean, healthy and fresh.

She roasts the pork in a combi oven, which blasts waves of heat, first moist then dry. The powerful combination produces spoon-soft meat and crisp skin faster than a home oven.

"Nobody but Kelly Ripa has a combi oven at home," Jenkins conceded. So, for home cooks, she developed a kind of cheaters' porchetta.

Once you locate a boneless pork shoulder with the skin, score, season and tie the meat. It then roasts in a very slow oven for almost five hours. That gives you plenty of time to prepare the rest of the game-day snacks.

Among those snacks should be cracklings, the American cousin of the French gratton and the chicharron common to Latin America.

Donald Link, a chef in New Orleans, recommends deep-frying cracklings in a two-step method like French fries and then coating them in a peppery Cajun spice mixture.

"Some people bring wine to dinner," Link said. "In Cajun country you bring boudin and cracklings."

KIM SEVERSON

The Pour

What should you expect from a \$20 bottle of wine?
nytimes.com/the pour

'Avatar' and 'The Hurt Locker' Lead Field of Oscar Nominees

LOS ANGELES — "Avatar" and "The Hurt Locker" took narrow leads in the Oscar race on Tuesday as the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences scattered its honors among an unusually wide field of contenders. Each film received nine nominations, including best picture and best director for James Cameron and Kathryn Bigelow.

The anti-Nazi revenge fantasy "Inglourious Basterds" was close behind with eight nominations, including best director and best original screenplay for Quentin Tarantino and best supporting actor for Christoph Waltz. The urban drama "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire, had six nominations, in-

cluding best picture, best director for Lee Daniels, best actress for Gabourey Sidibe, best supporting actress for Mo'Nique, and best adapted screenplay for Geoffrey Fletcher.

With "Precious," Daniels made instant Oscar history as the first black director of a best picture nominee. (John Singleton was the first African-American to be nominated for best director, though "Boyz n the Hood" was not a best picture finalist.)

Daniels said he hoped the nomination would bring more viewers to a movie — about the abuse and triumph of an overweight ghetto girl — that has been only a modest draw at the box office. "That's what these awards do,"

he said. "A lot of middle-class white Americans haven't seen the film yet."

"Up in the Air" also had a strong showing with six nominations, including best picture, best director for Jason Reitman, best adapted script, best actor for George Clooney, and two supporting actress nominations, for Vera Farmiga and Anna Kendrick.

The biggest surprise was a best picture nomination for "The Blind Side," a box-office hit about a white woman who helps a homeless young black man become a football star. Sandra Bullock was also nominated as best actress for her role in the film, which had not been widely seen as a best picture prospect.

The other best picture nominees in a field that was doubled to 10 from five this year were "District 9," "An Education," "A Serious Man" and "Up."

In expanding the best picture category — something it hasn't done since the awards for 1943's films — the academy's governors were hoping to spark new audience interest in a ceremony that recently has leaned toward independent-style fare like "No Country for Old Men," "There Will Be Blood" and "Milk." And the box-office successes "District 9" and "Up" certainly qualify as crowd-pleasers.

"The fact that they have 10 slots probably helped," said Neill Blomkamp, the director and a writer of "District 9," an allegorical look inside a detention camp full of space aliens. "The genre isn't something they typically go for, but the movie does have a lot of heart."

Previously, only one animated film had been nominated for best picture — Disney's "Beauty and the Beast," a 1991 nominee, before there was a separate category for best animated feature.

No broad comedy made the cut, though "The Hangover" had won a Golden Globe as best comic film. And "Avatar," with its vast popularity and critical success, would almost certainly have been included in a smaller field.

The awards will be given on March 7.

MICHAEL CIEPLY

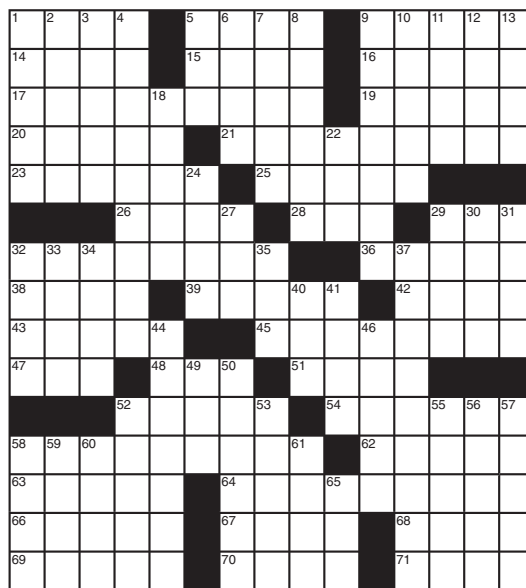
CLASSIC CROSSWORD Edited By Will Shortz

PUZZLE BY STEVE DOBIS

- ACROSS**
- 1 Breezes through
 - 5 Andrews and Edwards, for two: Abbr.
 - 9 Wall supports
 - 14 Blockhead
 - 15 Zoo barrier
 - 16 One getting one-on-one help
 - 17 *Movie starring a cross-dressing John Travolta
 - 19 Having a lot to lose?
 - 20 In base 8
 - 21 *Big writing assignment
 - 23 Enjoyed Bazoorka, e.g.
 - 25 Carillon sounds
 - 26 Lowly worker
 - 28 "... thousand times ..."
 - 29 Step up from dial-up
 - 32 Not at rest
 - 36 Driver's license feature
 - 38 Lab container
 - 39 Word that can precede the starts of the answers to the eight starred clues
 - 42 Lowell and Tan
 - 43 The "A" in WASP

- 45 Is on deck
- 47 Most apts. have them
- 48 Strike caller
- 51 Wizard's stick
- 52 Places to serve slop
- 54 Flea market deal, perhaps
- 58 *Very easy tasks
- 62 Unable to retreat, as an animal
- 63 Fine fiddle
- 64 *Electric Slide, for one
- 66 Introductory TV episode
- 67 Author Bagnold
- 68 Not e'en once
- 69 Idyllic places
- 70 B'way booth in Times Square
- 71 Temperance supporters

- DOWN**
- 1 Like some committees
 - 2 Alternative to first-class
 - 3 Cream of the crop
 - 4 *Nonbinding vote
 - 5 Sound booster at a concert
 - 6 Siege site



6/9/09 (No. 0609)

- 7 Called to a lamb, say
- 8 "Sophie's Choice" author
- 9 *Like a band-aid solution
- 10 Instruments in military bands
- 11 Lone Star State sch.
- 12 Dis and dis
- 13 Palm reader, e.g.
- 18 Winter driving hazard
- 22 6 on a telephone
- 24 The Everly Brothers' "All I Have to ___ Dream"
- 27 Japanese drama
- 29 Capitol feature
- 30 River of Hades
- 31 Not grasping the material, say
- 32 Lendl of tennis
- 33 Padre's boy
- 34 Rack purchases, briefly
- 35 Yuletide quaff
- 37 *Heels-over-head feat
- 40 Column crosser
- 41 Sign of sorrow
- 44 *Defeats mentally
- 46 Golf's Slammin' Sammy
- 49 Actress Farrow
- 50 Bit of shotgun shot
- 52 Determined to achieve
- 53 Long-bodied lizard
- 55 One of the Yokums
- 56 Cagney's TV partner
- 57 Close watchers
- 58 New Jersey's ___ May
- 59 In the thick of
- 60 Curly cabbage
- 61 Fit of pique
- 65 Publishers' hires: Abbr.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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