

Dave Barry's Year in Review --

(Continued from Page 1)

days. Newsweek runs a story headlined "Was Donald Trump's McDonald's Shift 'Staged'?" The New York Times runs six -- that's right, six -- stories about it, including one asserting that, among other infractions, Trump "shoveled a scoopful of fries the wrong way" and "committed what appeared to be a number of health code violations."

Somehow Trump survives all this journalism. He continues to crisscross the nation promising tax breaks for pretty much every category of US resident, including domestic animals, and giving increasingly improvisational speeches during which every thought fragment that seeps into his brain spurts instantly from his mouth without any kind of review. For example: Speaking to a rally in Latrobe, Pa., Trump informs the crowd that their beloved hometown hero, the late Arnold Palmer, had an unusually large putter. (We don't know whether the New York Times assigned a team of reporters to investigate this claim, but we would not rule it out.)

In another suave outreach move, the Trump campaign, ever sensitive to accusations of racism, holds a rally in Madison Square Garden featuring a comedian who jokes that -- prepare for hilarity -- Puerto Rico is garbage.

On the Democratic side, the Kamala Harris campaign, which has spent more than a billion dollars but is still struggling to clearly define the candidate's vision for the presidency, settles on an upbeat closing message: "Whoever She Is, She's Not Donald Trump." At exactly the same time Harris is making her big final pitch to voters, Joe Biden, who is still technically the president, somehow gains access to Zoom and lends the Harris campaign a helping hand by declaring, in response to the Trump-rally Puerto Rico joke, that roughly half of the US electorate is garbage. Thanks, Joe!

Meanwhile, in an issue that neither party talks about because fixing it would require political courage, the national debt goes over \$35 trillion, moving the nation still closer to the inevitable financial catastrophe that will leave future generations completely screwed. Fortunately, as we have noted, future generations are fine with this. "Don't worry about it!" they would say, if they could speak to our current political leadership. "We know you're busy leading!"

On a happier note, for the 14th consecutive year, the World Series is won by a team other than the Yankees.

In space, a large communications satellite unexpectedly explodes, creating debris that threatens other satellites. In the spirit of mercy we will not name the company that made the defective satellite, other than to say it rhymes with "blowing."

Speaking of unexpected, in ...

NOVEMBER

... the voters finally go to the polls for the most important American election since at least the dawn of time. All the expert political analysts and professional pollsters using scientific methodology agree that the race is extremely tight, a toss-up, a dead heat, especially in the crucial battleground states. It's too close to call! The experts are certain of this.

On election night, the TV networks are teeming with political commentators prepared to analyze and dissect and crunch the numbers far into the night as the nation settles in for the long, grueling process of determining the winner, a process that everyone agrees could go on for days, possibly even weeks, because of the extreme razor-thin closeness of the ...

Never mind. In roughly the same amount of time it takes to air a Geico commercial, the networks determine that Donald Trump has decisively won the election, including all of the so-called battleground states and four Canadian provinces. It's a stunning result and a massive failure by the expert political analysts, who humbly admit that they had no idea what was happening, and promise that from now on they will be more aware of their limitations.

We are, of course, joking. In a matter of seconds these experts pivot from being spectacularly clueless about what was going

to happen in the election to confidently explaining what happened in the election.

One theory is that it was not a great idea for the Democrats to insist that President Biden was fine until it was embarrassingly obvious that he was not, then replace him, via a secret process, with a candidate who was not great at talking and did not run in a single primary and who previously advocated positions that many Americans were not crazy about, which is why they voted, sometimes reluctantly, for Donald Trump.

One branch of the Democratic party accepts this theory and begins the painful but necessary process of self-examination. Another branch prefers to believe that the party is fine and the real problem is that most Americans are sexist racist pro-fascist morons, which may not be a winning message for the Democrats going forward, but it does enable this branch to feel better about itself.

For his part, Donald Trump has no doubt whatsoever that the American people have given him a mandate to deport anywhere up to 60 percent of the US population and -- in his words -- "turn this great nation around by appointing wildly unqualified individuals to the cabinet."

OK, he didn't actually say that, but he did nominate Matt Gaetz to be attorney general, which is like nominating Jeffrey Dahmer to be surgeon general. Gaetz is soon forced to withdraw his name from consideration after Trump is informed that the US Senate, for all its shortcomings, is not completely insane.

Another controversial Trump nomination, this one for secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, is Robert F. "Roadkill" Kennedy Jr., who used to think Trump was basically Hitler but now thinks he's great. Kennedy is deeply suspicious of vaccines, Big Pharma, the CIA, fluoride, seed oils, WiFi, Froot Loops and chemicals in general. He also wants to make America healthy again by reducing the consumption of the over-processed junk foods that have turned many Americans into big fat waddling tubs of lard, like ... OK, like many Americans.

In environmental news, 70,000 world leaders, politicians, bureaucrats, aides, activists, consultants, celebrities, media people, caterers, chauffeurs, bodyguards, grifters, masseurs, masseuses and private-jet pilots gather for COP29, the massive conference held every year by the United Nations to solve the pesky problem of global climate change. This year's host nation is Azerbaijan, which, as a corrupt authoritarian state whose main source of income is selling billions of dollars worth of oil and gas, naturally wants everybody to stop using so darned much oil and gas. The conference is once again a huge success as measured in metric tons of hors d'oeuvres consumed, and everybody agrees to gather again for COP30 next year, on the off chance that global climate change is still going on.

Speaking of comically futile gestures: The Australian Senate passes a law banning children under 16 from social media. This law will be enforced by adults who have to ask their children for technical support when they accidentally lock themselves out of their iPhones.

Speaking of protecting children, in ...

DECEMBER

... Joe Biden, who repeatedly promised that he would not

pardon his son Hunter, cements his legacy as the most Joe Biden president ever by pardoning his son Hunter, thus forcing the Democratic party to change its mantra from "Nobody is above the law!" to "Hey, it's complicated." The wording of the pardon document is quite broad, covering "all offenses committed between 2014 and 2024, including any currently unsolved bank robberies, not that we are suggesting anything."

The pardon outrages many Republicans who would be fine with it if Trump did it, while it's fine with many Democrats who would be outraged if Trump did it. For that is how our system of checks and balances works.

Meanwhile, Trump is acting as though he's already the president -- meeting with foreign leaders, signing treaties, vetoing legislation, authorizing drone strikes and ordering the beheading of "Peach" and "Blossom," the two turkeys Biden pardoned for Thanksgiving.

Helping Trump with the transition is his new best billionaire friend, Elon Musk, the genius tech visionary who's going to make the federal government efficient by implementing "outside the box" measures such as:

-- Having veterinarians install locator chips in all federal employees.

-- Replacing both the Air Force and the Internal Revenue Service with laser-equipped orbital space robots.

-- Combining the departments of energy, transportation, labor, agriculture, interior and justice into a single agency called "The Guv," which will be physically located in Taiwan but accessible via an app.

-- Renting Hawaii out for proms.

It's an exciting time to be alive, as post-election America begins to discover, with varying degrees of excitement, what it voted for.

After numerous sightings of mysterious lights in the sky over New Jersey, government officials seek to calm an increasingly alarmed public.

"We've investigated these lights, and there's absolutely nothing to worry about," states Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, who adds, "on an unrelated note, people should keep their children indoors."

In other news, a horrific crime on a New York City sidewalk leads to a national conversation about the US health care system, which reveals that a truly disturbing number of people believe the following three things:

- 1. The health care system is bad.
2. Therefore, murder is OK.
3. Especially if the murderer is cute.

Clearly, this year needs to end. Which is why we're looking forward to New Year's Eve -- when, in a beloved tradition, thousands of revelers will gather in Times Square to say goodbye to 2024 and welcome 2025. We like to think that on that night, as the seconds tick down to zero and that giant ball starts to descend, the people gazing up at it will all be united, if only for a moment, by a common hope -- a hope shared by the millions of us watching on television -- specifically, the hope that the giant ball was not manufactured by the Boeing Corp.

Also, while we're hoping, let's hope that 2025 will be a better year.

How could it be worse? Try not to think about it.

How social media affects kids' mental health



Social media has become such a key component of most people's lives that it is easy to think that it as always been there. SixDegrees, created in 1997, was the first social media site similar to the format known today.

When SixDegrees shut down in 2001, Friendster, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Facebook soon took root. The University of Maine reports there are now 4.8 billion social media users worldwide, representing 92.7 percent of all internet users. And according to the American Family Survey 2023, 96 percent of parents say their kids have access to at least one social media platform. Many use multiple online platforms daily.

Although social media may have originated as a means to bring people together, there are many who argue that it actually does the opposite. Instances of cyberbullying, which is a form of online harassment, have grown as social media has become more pervasive.

Some experts believe that mental health concerns are an unexpected side effect of increased social media use, says Johns Hopkins Medicine. In fact, in the spring of 2023, United States Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA, released an advisory that suggested social media is harmful to young people. In 2024, Dr. Murthy called for a surgeon general's warning label on social media not unlike the warnings on cigarette packages.

How might social media affect children's mental health? Here are some of the main concerns.

Changes in a developing brain: According to the Surgeon General's report, children's brains go through a highly sensitive period of development between the ages of 10 and 19, when feelings of self-worth are forming. Frequent social media use may affect these

feelings as children compare themselves to others they see online. In addition, functions like emotional learning, impulse control and emotional regulation may be affected.

Development of depression: Johns Hopkins Medicine says research has demonstrated there are high rates of depression attributed to very low social media use and very high social media use. Finding a healthy balance might not be as easy as it seems.

Addiction: There is some evidence that children become addicted to checking social media, which can lead to addiction-like behaviors in other areas. According to The Addiction Center, a Web-based substance abuse resource, addiction to social media is driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on that impairs other

important areas of life. Fear of missing out (FOMO) is another threat to kids' mental health.

Low self-esteem issues: Children and teenagers who compare themselves to others' carefully curated online profiles (which usually are not telling the whole story) can develop feelings of inadequacy and body image issues.

Exposure to inappropriate content: Social media may introduce children to content and images that are not appropriate for their age levels and capacity to understand and interpret. According to Dr. Murthy's report, deaths have been linked to suicide- and self-harm-related content, such as risk-taking challenges or asphyxiation content. Viewing this content normalizes these behaviors for some youngsters.

-metrocreativeconnection

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MADDOCK SCHOOL BOARD

November 14, 2024
A regular meeting of the Maddock School Board was held Nov. 14, 2024. Present: Sheila Lindgren, Justin Maddock, Bryan Kenner, Paul Backstrom and Paul Rice; Mr. Allmaras; and Shannon Sabbe, business manager. Guests: Dennette Buckmier, Stacy Sabbe, Heidi Keller and one student council representative.

The meeting was called to order at 7 a.m.

Mr. Allmaras asked to add attendance policy to the agenda to letter A and shift everything else down.

A motion was made by Backstrom, seconded by Kenner, to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Kenner, seconded by Rice, to approve the consent agenda. The motion carried.

Aabrekke, Shelley \$47.50
Advanced Business
Methods 757.81

Aflac 355.65
Allmaras, Benjamin J. 222.80
Anne Carlsen Center 9,202.00
Backstrom, Paul 30.00
BC Farmers Press 151.50

Blake, Don 750.00
BSN Sports, Inc. 75.00
Cash & Carry Lumber ... 631.03
CenDak 15,627.01
City of Maddock 4,799.91
Cole Papers 1,167.92

Colonial Life & Accident
Insurance 168.60
DRN 1,733.65
Follett Software Co. 827.88
Four Winds HS 125.60

Gale, Jane 15.00
Great Minds PBC 1,248.59
Harlow's Bus Sales,
Inc. 250.85

Harlow's Bus Sales 891.37
Heart of America HMO . 72.00
Hirchert, Bruce 30.00
IntegratEd 3,221.52
IXL Learning 500.00

Johnson's Plumbing
& Appliance 298.50
Jones, Jason & Mary 375.00
Kallenbach, Elise 112.66
Lakeside Lock & Key 423.00

Lindseth, Mary 106.46
Minot State University ... 167.00
NAPA Auto Supply 284.01
ND Center for Distance
Education 229.00

ND Horizons 28.00
ND Public Health
Insurance Trust 23,922.87
North Star CCU 250,000.00
NE Education Services
Cooperative 100.00
Perrin Mobile Medical ... 200.00

Popplers Music 106.79
Region IV Music
& Speech 125.00
Sabbe, Shannon 205.62

Sears, Kathleen 4.98
Share Corporation 2,172.00
Tracy's Market 83.46
Vestis 418.44
Wage Works 509.15
Wickenheiser, Andrew .. 575.86
Widmer Roel 2,000.00
Total \$325,350.99

There were no public comments.
Shannon Sabbe read Mrs. Hill's principal report.

The student council representative gave a report.
Mr. Allmaras gave the superintendent report.

Shannon Sabbe gave the athletic director report.
Discussion was held on attendance policy. A motion was made by Maddock, seconded by Kenner, to table until December meeting. The motion carried.

Superintendent evaluation -- A motion was made by Maddock, seconded by Kenner, to approve personal/professional goals in satisfactory rating. Roll call was all in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Kenner, seconded by Rice, to approve leadership competencies in satisfactory rating. Roll call was in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Backstrom, seconded by Maddock, to approve executive director expectations in satisfactory rating. Roll call was in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Maddock, seconded by Kenner, to approve strategic/operational plan progress in satisfactory rating. Roll call was in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Kenner, seconded by Maddock, to approve superintendent in satisfactory rating overall. Roll call was in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Backstrom, seconded by Rice, to approve Policy SE 6 in compliance. Roll call was all in favor. The motion carried.

Discussion was held on Lindsey Schools.
Strategic plan discussion was held.

Convention discussion was held.
A motion was made by Rice, seconded by Kenner, to adjourn at 8:19 a.m. The motion carried.

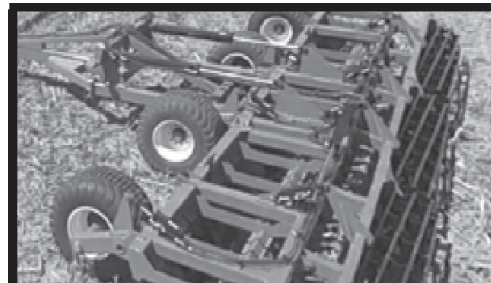
Shannon Sabbe
Business Manager

Sheila Lindgren
Board President

Did You Know?

The American Heartworm Society advises dog owners to have their furry companions tested for heartworm annually. Such tests can typically be conducted during routine preventive care visits to the veterinarian. The AHS notes that such tests are necessary even for dogs that are taking year-round heartworm prevention medications. Tests can confirm that such programs are working or indicate if they are not effective. The American Veterinary Medical Association notes that antigen tests are the most commonly performed tests. These tests detect the presence of adult female heartworms and they are typically highly accurate. If a test is positive, veterinarians may recommend further testing, including radiographs, a blood profile and an echocardiogram. Such tests can determine a number of things about the infection, including its severity. The AVMA also notes that the additional testing can help determine the best course of treatment. Cat owners should know that it's more difficult to detect heartworm in cats than in dogs. The AHS indicates that cats are much less likely than dogs to have adult heartworms, making the disease harder to detect in felines. Veterinarians may recommend cats receive both the antigen test and an antibody test, which detects exposure to heartworm larvae. The AVMA notes that more testing may increase the likelihood of detecting the disease in cats.

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NEW EQUIPMENT

- Haybuster 710 Vertical Mixer
Mandako 33' Twister
Artex model 600 Manure Spreader
Killbros 360 Seed Tenders
Norwood 30-35-40 Kwik-Tills
Sitrex 9-14-16-20 Wheel Rakes - In Stock
Haybuster 2660 & 2665 Bale Processor
Kosch Double 9' Hydraulic Sickle Mowers
Universal 1547 UniTube Self-propelled
Killbros 1950 Grain Cart
Mandako Land Roller
Hustler Lawn Mowers

16000 Sisal Twine \$53
64x7000 Net Wrap \$220
67x7000 Net Wrap \$223

USED EQUIPMENT

- 2660 Haybuster Bale Processor
2574 Haybuster Bale Processor with Blower
S-77 Gleaner combine 2012 2WD
5000 Unverferth Grain Cart
35' 9250 Gleaner Flex Draper Air Bar
Haybuster 2655
MF 2856A Baler
2021 40' Kwik-Till
4) Rowse Double 9' Mowers
2) Kosch Hyd Double 9' Mowers
316 New Holland Disc MC
430 Farm Aid Mixer Wagon
Brent 1082 Grain Cart
MK20 Sitrex V-rake
R75 Gleaner Combine
2020 - 40' Kwik-Till
Ford New Holland 9030 Bi-Directional
Haybuster 2665
Morris 1400 Hay Hiker
Demco 750 Grain Cart
R-72 Gleaner combine
38' Summers Disk
41' 570 Salford
425 Meyers Manure Spreader
Unverferth 8 Shank Model Zone Builder

Table with 3 columns: Vertical Tillage Blades, Salford (20", 22"), Degelman (20" Notched, 22" Notched), Summers (20" 8 Wave Notched, 22" 8 Wave Notched)

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Esmond Museum information

Anyone seeking information about the Esmond Museum is welcome to contact Loren Preuss at 1-701-249-3566.

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