

January 1, 2018 - DAVE BARRY

Dave Barry's end of the year report was in The Miami Herald.

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The next day finds you lying naked in a Dumpster in a different state, smeared from head to toe with a mixture of Sriracha sauce and glitter. At first you remember nothing. But then, as your throbbing brain slowly reboots, memories of the night before, disturbing memories, begin creeping into your consciousness. As the full, hideous picture comes into focus, you curl into a ball, whimpering, asking yourself over and over: Did that really happen?

That's how we feel about 2017. It was a year so surreal, so densely populated with strange and alarming events, that you have to seriously consider the possibility that somebody — and when we say "somebody," we mean "Russia" — was putting LSD in our water supply. A bizarre event would occur, and it would be all over the news, but before we could wrap our minds around it, another bizarre event would occur, then another and another, coming at us faster and faster, battering the nation with a Category 5 weirdness hurricane that left us hunkering down, clinging to our sanity, no longer certain what was real. ...

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- *In the Super Bowl, 57-year-old quarterback Tom Brady leads the New England Patriots to a remarkable comeback victory over the Atlanta Falcons that definitely involved cheating. We just don't know how yet. ...*

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Easter Egg Roll, which the president, using his height and weight advantage, wins easily. CNN broadcasts a Special Report alleging that Easter is also a thing in Russia.

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Speaking of excitement, Hillary Clinton, responding to the insatiable public appetite for reliving the 2016 election over and over and over, comes out with her new tell-all book titled "You Idiots," in which she candidly reveals that she was in fact a superb candidate and charming human who totally would have won the presidency had it not been for — among many other unfair obstacles that were unfairly placed in her path — James Comey, the Russians, the so-called "Electoral College," Bernie Sanders, the Democratic National Committee, Anthony Weiner, sexism, Barack Obama, the media, her incompetent campaign staff and the frankly unacceptable stupidity of the American public. Next stop: 2020! ...

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AND SO ON ...

Miami Herald

[Dave Barry's 2017 Year in Review: Did that really happen?](#)

by Dave Barry

Looking back on 2017 is like waking up after a party where you made some poor decisions, such as drinking tequila squeezed from the underpants of a person you do not really know. (At least you *hope* it was tequila.)

The next day finds you lying naked in a Dumpster in a different state, smeared from head to toe with a mixture of Sriracha sauce and glitter. At first you remember nothing. But then, as your throbbing brain slowly reboots, memories of the night before, disturbing memories, begin creeping into your consciousness. As the full, hideous picture comes into focus, you curl into a ball, whimpering, asking yourself over and over: *Did that really happen?*

That's how we feel about 2017. It was a year so surreal, so densely populated with strange and alarming events, that you have to seriously consider the possibility that somebody — and when we say "somebody," we mean "Russia" — was putting LSD in our water supply. A bizarre event would occur, and it would be all over the news, but before we could wrap our minds around it, *another* bizarre event would occur, then another and another, coming at us faster and faster, battering the nation with a Category 5 weirdness hurricane that left us hunkering down, clinging to our sanity, no longer certain what was real.

Take "covfefe." Remember? For a little while, it was *huge*. Everybody was talking about it! Covfefe! But then, just like that, it was gone. What the hell WAS it? *Did it even really happen?*

Another example: We have this vague memory that, for the briefest flicker of a moment, the White House communications director was a pathologically bronze man named Anthony Scaramucci, who — remember, this was the *White House communications director* — called up a reporter for the New Yorker and informed him, on the record, that he, Anthony Scaramucci, differed from White House Chief Strategist Steve Bannon in that he, Anthony Scaramucci, THE WHITE HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, was not trying to commit an act of self-gratification that would be extremely challenging even for a professional contortionist.

Did THAT really happen?

And were there really thousands of people marching around Washington wearing vagina hats?

And did the Secretary of State really call the President of the United States a "moron?"

And did the president (of the United States!) respond by *challenging the Secretary of State to compare IQ tests?*

We want to believe that we imagined these things. But we fear we did not.

There's one thing we definitely remember happening in 2017: the "fidget spinner" fad. This was huge, and for a good reason: It was extremely stupid. In terms of mental stimulation, fidget-spinning makes nose-picking look like three-dimensional chess. You mindlessly spin the thing around and around, accomplishing nothing. It's an idiotic, brain-cell-destroying waste of time.

So it was the perfect fad for 2017.

The perfect artistic achievement was "The Emoji Movie," which was released in July and was widely hailed by critics as possibly the stupidest movie ever made. It was the fidget spinner of movies. One of the emoji voices was provided by the distinguished British actor Patrick Stewart, who has been awarded many honors, including a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II.

The role played by Sir Patrick Stewart was: Poop.

If that wasn't the essence of 2017, we don't know what was.

So now, finally, it is time to flush this turd of a year down the commode of history. But before we do, let's don eclipse glasses to prevent retina damage, then take one last flinching look back at the events of 2017, starting with ...

JANUARY

... which begins with the nation still bitterly divided over the 2016 election. On one side are the progressives, who refuse to accept Donald Trump as president, their reasoning being that:

1. He is Hitler.
2. He is literally Hitler.
3. He is LITERALLY WORSE THAN HITLER.

On the other side are the Trump supporters, whose position is:

1. You lost!
2. You whiny liberal pukes.
3. SHUT UP, LOSERS.

So there does not appear to be a lot of common ground between these positions. Nevertheless as the year progresses, the two sides will gradually find a way — call it the open-minded generosity of the American spirit — to loathe each other even more.

For his part, President Trump, having campaigned on three major promises — to build a border wall, repeal Obamacare and reform the tax system — immediately, upon being sworn in, rolls up his sleeves and gets down to the vital task of disputing news-media estimates of the size of the crowd at his inauguration, which the president claims — and Fox News confirms — was “the largest group of humans ever assembled.” The president also finds time, in his role as commander in chief, to send out numerous randomly punctuated tweets.

Assisting the president as he pursues this agenda is a crack White House team that includes Steve Bannon, Sebastian Gorka, Michael Flynn, Reince Priebus and Sean Spicer, all of whom will, in the coming weeks and months, disappear like teenagers in a “Friday the 13th” movie. In the Trump White House, you never know who will get whacked next, but you know somebody will. Although Melania seems reasonably secure in the post of First Lady. For now.

Meanwhile the big emerging journalism story is the Russians, who, according to many unnamed sources, messed with the election. Nobody seems to know how, specifically, the Russians affected the election, but everybody is pretty sure they did *something*, especially CNN, which has not been so excited about a story since those heady months in 2014 when it provided 24/7 video coverage of random objects floating in the Pacific while panels of experts speculated on whether these objects might or might not have anything to do with that missing Malaysian airliner. You can tune into CNN anytime, day or night, and you are virtually guaranteed to hear the word “Russians” within 10 seconds, even if it’s during a Depends commercial.

The most exciting Russian angle concerns an alleged “dossier” that allegedly alleges that Trump allegedly paid some alleged Russian prostitutes to allegedly urinate on an alleged bed that had allegedly been used by President Barack Obama during an alleged visit to Moscow. There appears to be no evidence whatsoever that this allegation is true, but since it involves two U.S. presidents AND prostitutes AND urine, many major news outlets — you know who you are — have no journalistic alternative but to run with it.

The biggest political story comes at the end of the month, when Trump nominates Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, noting that the letters in “Neil Gorsuch” can be rearranged to spell both “Heroic Lungs” and “Lunch Orgies.” Democratic leaders pledge to give Gorsuch a fair and open-minded hearing, then destroy him.

Finally, in the month’s non-Trump news, we have this: You’re an idiot. There WAS no non-Trump news.

This trend will continue in ...

FEBRUARY

... when the Russian scandal claims its first victim, Michael Flynn, who is forced to resign as the president’s national security adviser following revelations that he misled Vice President Mike Pence about discussions he had with Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak, whose name can be rearranged to spell “Seeks Girly Yak.” President Trump thanks Flynn for his estimated two hours and 35 minutes of outstanding service to the administration, then resumes his laser-like executive concentration on the crucial task of emitting grammatically questionable tweets about FAKE NEWS. The already strained relationship between the Trump administration and the press deteriorates into open hostility, culminating in a White House press briefing that consists entirely of Press Secretary Sean Spicer and CNN correspondent Jim Acosta spitting on each other.

There actually are a few non-Trump events in February:

- NASA, in a major scientific discovery, announces that a star system 39 light-years away contains seven Earth-size planets, at least three of which appear to have Starbucks.
- In the Super Bowl, 57-year-old quarterback Tom Brady leads the New England Patriots to a remarkable comeback victory over the Atlanta Falcons that definitely involved cheating. We just don’t know how yet.
- In the Grammys, Adele wins Record of the Year and Song of the Year for yet another one of those wrenchingly emotional Adele ballads that make you want to lie down and slit your wrists, or maybe that’s just us.
- The entertainment highlight of the month comes during the Academy Awards, when PricewaterhouseCoopers (motto: “The Fidget Spinner of Consulting Firms”) comes up with a brilliant gambit to enliven the 14-hour broadcast by handing Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway the wrong envelope for Best Picture. Hilarity ensues, and PricewaterhouseCoopers is immediately hired by congressional Republican leadership to develop a strategy for repealing Obamacare.

In foreign news, North Korea, in what some observers view as an act of deliberate provocation, launches a missile that lands in downtown Honolulu. This seems ominous, but at the time everybody in Washington is still focused on the urination dossier.

This focus continues in ...

MARCH

... when Washington is consumed by Russia Mania, to the point where the panels of expert speculators on CNN are being fed intravenously on-air so they don't have to take even a moment's break from speculating about all the alleged things that the Russians have allegedly been up to. Adding fuel to the fire is FBI Director James Comey, who tells a hearing of the House Committee on Holding Hearings that the Russians definitely were involved in the 2016 election and currently control the Department of Commerce, the Coast Guard and as many as eight state legislatures.

For his part, President Tweet declares — and Fox News confirms — that the allegations that Russia helped him are FAKE NEWS and furthermore the Russians had numerous contacts with Democrats, including Barack Obama, the Clintons, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi. This raises the question: If all these Russians were over here making contacts and interfering with our elections, who the hell was running Russia? Poland?

On the legislative front, the big story is Obamacare, which the Republicans have been running against for seven straight years. Their message has been: "Vote for us, and we WILL get rid of Obamacare!" So now that they control the White House and both houses of Congress, there can be no stopping them. It's time to deliver! GET READY FOR A REPUBLICAN-LEADERSHIP-STYLE BUTT-WHUPPIN', OBAMACARE!

When the smoke clears, Obamacare is sitting at the bar, unscathed, sipping a whiskey and flirting with the barmaid. Republican congressional leaders are strewn all over the barroom floor, noses bleeding, underpants pulled over their foreheads. But this setback does not deter them for long. They pick themselves up, dust themselves off, tuck themselves back in and start making plans for their next bold legislative masterstroke. For that is the kind of leadership they are.

On a much sadder note, Chuck Berry, a genuine original American genius, duckwalks off to that Big Bandstand in the Sky. His songs told stories; his guitar made you dance; his lyrics made you smile. Nobody else could have written (to pick one of many examples) this analysis, from the basically perfect song "Maybellene," of automotive thermodynamics:

The rainwater blowin' all under my hood

I knew that was doin' my motor good

In sports, National Football Concussion League team owners approve the move of the Oakland Raiders to Nevada, where the team will be known as the Las Vegas Point Spreads. NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, asked if he thought a Las Vegas team could consistently draw adequate crowds, answers: "Two words: topless cheerleaders."

Speaking of excitement, in ...

APRIL

... tension mounts on the Korean peninsula when Vice President Mike Pence visits South Korea and, while expressing resolve and gazing sternly across the DMZ, is brushed by an extremely low-flying North Korean missile that leaves him clothed in nothing but boxer shorts and a red necktie. In response, President Trump vows to "send some really huge Navy boats over there, believe me." Pentagon sources note that this threat is contingent upon the Navy being able to get the engines started.

The Senate confirms the Neil Gorsuch nomination by a 54-45 vote after Republican senators invoke the “nuclear option,” under which nobody is allowed to go to the bathroom until a vote has been taken. This brings the Supreme Court back to its full complement of nine justices, at least six of whom are believed to still be alive.

In a break with tradition, Trump does not attend the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner, despite assurances from the association that it will be “a fun evening” featuring “lighthearted nonpartisan entertainment” including “a traditional dunk tank.” But another Washington tradition is upheld as the president and first lady host the annual White House Easter Egg Roll, which the president, using his height and weight advantage, wins easily. CNN broadcasts a Special Report alleging that Easter is also a thing in Russia.

Bill O’Reilly, beset by accusations of sexual harassment, is fired by Fox News and immediately hired as Director of New Project Development by The Weinstein Company.

In aviation news, United Airlines (“The Fidget Spinner of Airlines”) breaks new customer-service ground when it decides that a 69-year-old passenger who has already boarded his flight must be “re-accommodated” via a technique similar to the one the Mexican army used to re-accommodate the Texans at the Alamo, leaving him with a concussion, broken teeth and a broken nose. At first United’s CEO defends the airline’s actions on the grounds that, quote, “We have the collective IQ of a starfish.” But after a firestorm of public outrage he apologizes and promises that in the future United will employ a “more humane” re-accommodation policy based on “respect for our customers and, when needed, tranquilizer darts.”

In college basketball, the NCAA men’s tournament — which epitomizes the true spirit of American amateur athletics — concludes when a Nike team, which got to the finals by beating another Nike team, wins the championship by defeating yet another Nike team, triggering jubilant celebrations far into the night at Nike corporate headquarters.

Speaking of triggering, in ...

MAY

... Trump fires FBI Director James Comey in an effort to get rid of this pesky FAKE NEWS — as confirmed by Fox News — Russia distraction so the administration can get on with the critical work of failing to enact its agenda. The result of the firing, of course, is that the political/media complex becomes even MORE obsessed with the Russians, who according to CNN sources now make up 47 percent of the population of Washington, D.C. Under intense pressure to do something, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, whose name can be rearranged to spell “Snootier Nerds,” appoints former FBI Director Robert Mueller (“Mr. Leer Trouble”) as special counsel, with the power to, quote, “investigate this Russian thing until the Earth crashes into the sun.”

In other political developments, Greg Gianforte, a Republican running for Montana’s vacant congressional seat, gets national headlines when he body-slams a reporter for the Guardian newspaper. He is immediately hired as Director of Customer Relations by United Airlines.

No, seriously, despite being charged with assault, Gianforte wins easily, yet another indication that in much of the nation journalists enjoy the same level of popularity as head lice.

In international news, Trump attends the G7 summit in Sicily, where a major agenda item is climate change, which the president has stated — and Fox News has confirmed — is a HOAX. The summit ends in disappointment when the heads of state of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom inform Trump that he cannot legally fire them.

Meanwhile North Korea's Central News Agency reports that Kim Jong Un has approved deployment of a missile, the Pukguksong-2. This expands the rogue nation's arsenal, which already includes (we are not making this arsenal up) the Taepodong-2, the Pukkuksong-2, the Kumsong-3, the Koksan and, of course, the No Dong.

In sports, the Kentucky Derby is won by a horse with a large swoosh tattooed on its butt.

Speaking of triumphs, in ...

JUNE

... Republican congressional leaders, determined to avenge their humiliating defeat at the hands of Obamacare, emerge after months of closed-door meetings with a new, smarter repeal strategy. The GOP, led by Senate Majority Leader Mitch "Mojo" McConnell, is cagey about the details, but sources say the plan involves a "high cliff" and a "really heavy safe," which the Republicans plan to purchase from the Acme Corp.

On the scandal front, former FBI Director Comey, in dramatic testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee, admits, under intense questioning from Democratic senators, that he cannot say "with absolute certainty" that Vice President Pence is not a Russian citizen.

Meanwhile there are troubling indications that the relationship between the White House and the news media may be worsening:

- President Trump orders a drone strike against "Morning Joe."
- Jim Acosta bites off Sean Spicer's nose.

In international news, the United Nations Security Council, in its strongest response yet to continued North Korean missile tests, unanimously passes a resolution threatening to suspend Kim Jong Un's Netflix account.

Amazon, aka the Death Star of Retail, becomes even larger and more powerful when it announces plans to buy Whole Foods for \$13.7 billion, or enough money to buy nearly four pounds of top sirloin at current Whole Foods prices.

Facebook announces that it has reached a total of two billion users, who in 2017 alone have already posted a total of 17 trillion impassioned statements of their political views, which have changed a total of zero minds.

Speaking of the informational value of social media, in ...

JULY

... President Trump, following in the footsteps of Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, tweets out a video clip from the internet in which he body-slams a wrestler with a CNN logo

superimposed over the wrestler's head. This in itself is so embarrassing that everybody assumes the story cannot get any stupider, but CNN rises to the occasion by announcing that its "KFile" investigative team has ferreted out the identity of the image's creator, a private citizen who goes by the internet name "HanA**holeSolo." (We are not making this up.) In a lengthy story on this journalistic coup, CNN magnanimously declares that it will not reveal HanA**holeSolo's identity because he apologized and "showed his remorse" for other things he has tweeted that CNN, in its constitutionally prescribed role as Internet Police, deemed unacceptable. And thus the republic is saved.

In other news, Trump's appointment of Anthony Scaramucci as communications director triggers the resignation of press secretary Sean Spicer, followed by the departure of chief of staff Reince Priebus, whom Trump replaces with John Kelly, who immediately fires ... Anthony Scaramucci! These events reinforce the growing perception that, in terms of managerial sophistication, the Trump White House is basically a Chuck E. Cheese with a Rose Garden.

On the scandal front, Donald Trump Jr. confirms that in 2016 he met with a high-powered Russian lawyer about obtaining incriminating information on Hillary Clinton from the Russian government. Trump Jr. claims the meeting was no big deal because — and Fox News confirms this — "it was *last year*, for God's sake."

On Capitol Hill, the Senate Republican leadership executes its plan to repeal Obamacare, which goes smoothly right up until the moment when the Acme Corp. safe, which was supposed to fall on the Affordable Care Act, somehow lands on "Mojo" McConnell instead. Undaunted, the GOP leaders immediately begin working on a new strategy; this one, sources say, will involve a "really heavy anvil."

In business news, Amazon purchases the state of Montana, which the retail giant plans to use, according to its press release, for "storage." Coca-Cola says it will replace "Coke Zero" with "Coca-Cola Zero Sugar," which as the name suggests contains no sugar. It does contain rat poison, but marketing studies show that consumers are much more concerned about sugar.

As the month ends, the Nevada Parole Board grants parole to O.J. Simpson, who will be released from prison in October, at which time he will join the Customer Compliance Division of United Airlines.

Speaking of violence, in ...

AUGUST

... white nationalists and Nazis converge on Charlottesville, Virginia, for a "Unite the Right" rally that ends in tragedy when a woman protesting the rally is killed by a car driven by a man linked to a white supremacist group. In response, President Trump, displaying a degree of moral discernment seldom seen outside the flatworm community, declares that there was blame "on many sides," further noting that there were "some very fine people on both sides," apparently a reference to the Nazi party's Salvation Army branch.

With emotions running high in the wake of Charlottesville, ESPN executives decide to pull announcer Robert Lee off the broadcast of the University of Virginia football game, out of concern that his name might be disturbing to those viewers who are as stupid as ESPN executives.

In other protest news, police in Berkeley, California, battle anti-fascist activists, or “antifa,” who fight fascism by violently assaulting anybody who might do or say or think something the “antifa” deem unacceptable.

On the political front, Steve Bannon resigns as chief White House strategist so he can spend more time killing puppies with a hammer.

International tension mounts when North Korea shoots a missile over Japan, prompting President Trump, speaking from his Strategic Golf Club Command Bunker in New Jersey, to warn that North Korea will be met with “fire and fury ... the likes of which the world has never seen before.” Moments later the club’s 15th green is converted into a smoking crater 300 feet across by an explosion that club officials blame on “an electrical short.” This is confirmed by Fox News.

In England, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, retires from public appearances at the age of 96, after palace physicians determine that he actually passed away at age 93.

In a welcome diversion toward the end of this tumultuous month, Americans are treated to a rare celestial display as the sun is totally eclipsed by a 2,000-mile-wide Amazon logo. Fox News declares it to be “the greatest eclipse of any presidential administration ever,” although CNN reports that, according to its sources, there have been “suspiciously similar” eclipses in Russia.

Meanwhile back on Earth, in ...

SEPTEMBER

... international tension continues to mount as President Trump, speaking to the United Nations, calls Kim Jong Un “Rocket Man” and says the North Korean leader is “on a suicide mission.” In response, Kim calls Trump “a frightened dog” and “a mentally deranged U.S. dotard.” At this point Trump and Kim have no honorable choice but to meet in person, strip to their waists and settle their dispute by flailing at each other with their pudgy fists until oily rivers of sweat mixed with hair product run down the quivering mounds of flab that constitute their bodies.

We are kidding, of course: That would be childish and irresponsible. Instead the two leaders will continue to call each other names from a safe distance as the world inches closer to nuclear war.

On Capitol Hill, Republican congressional leaders, after months of frustration, finally execute their plan to repeal Obamacare, only to discover that, because of a procedural error, they have instead accidentally repealed a congressional act establishing June as Nasal Polyp Awareness Month. “Close enough,” declares “Mojo” McConnell, and the GOP brain trust moves on to tax reform.

In business news, Equifax (“The Fidget Spinner of Credit-Reporting Agencies”) reveals that it had a massive data breach in which the personal information of approximately 143 million consumers was obtained by cybercriminals who were able to guess the Equifax password, which was “PASSWORD.” Equifax officials promise they have taken “extreme precautions” to prevent further breaches, including changing to a new password (“NEW PASSWORD”).

Apple announces three new iPhones, including the iPhone X, the iPhone Y and the iPhone Zero Sugar.

Speaking of excitement, Hillary Clinton, responding to the insatiable public appetite for reliving the 2016 election over and over and over, comes out with her new tell-all book titled “You Idiots,” in which she candidly reveals that she was in fact a superb candidate and charming human who totally would have won the presidency had it not been for — among many other unfair obstacles that were unfairly placed in her path — James Comey, the Russians, the so-called “Electoral College,” Bernie Sanders, the Democratic National Committee, Anthony Weiner, sexism, Barack Obama, the media, her incompetent campaign staff and the frankly unacceptable stupidity of the American public. Next stop: 2020!

Fortunately the month is not completely consumed by political divisiveness. In a festive fall sports tradition, millions of Americans set aside their differences and join together in rooting for or against professional football players depending on what they do or do not do during the national anthem.

But politics again takes center stage in ...

OCTOBER

... when former Trump campaign officials Paul Manafort and Rick Gates are indicted in connection with special counsel Mueller’s Russia probe, sending CNN into a panel-gasm so intense that the camera lens becomes smeared with political-insider fluids. Trump responds by tweeting that the charges involve events from “years ago,” and there was “NO COLLUSION!” This is proof enough for Fox News, which resumes its regularly scheduled programming on “Fudge Recipes of Country Music Stars.”

In a related development, Facebook executives, testifying before a subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee, confirm that at least 60 percent of the people you friended because you thought they went to high school with you are in fact Russians.

Meanwhile a major scandal engulfs the entertainment world when The New York Times reveals that powerful movie producer Harvey Weinstein, despite being a prominent supporter of all the correct causes, basically spent the past several decades lumbering around in an open bathrobe forcing himself on unreceptive women. This news comes as a big shock to members of the Hollywood community, especially coming on the heels of their recent discovery that the pope is Catholic.

Emboldened by public revulsion over the Weinstein story, more women in the entertainment industry come forward with accounts of being harassed or assaulted by a steadily growing list of men that will eventually include pretty much every prominent male entertainment figure except the Geico Gecko. The story quickly spreads beyond show business as thousands of women, using the hashtag #MeToo, take to the internet to recount their experiences of being sexually harassed, reinforcing the growing national consensus that men, as a gender, are basically pond scum with hands.

Abroad, in a controversial referendum, the citizens of Catalonia vote overwhelmingly in favor of declaring their region’s independence from Spain so it can be converted into an Amazon fulfillment center.

Speaking of foreign countries, in ...

NOVEMBER

... President Trump goes on a 12-day trip to Asia, which is a very, very important continent containing a tremendous number of Asians. The trip is a huge success featuring many tremendous meals. The highlight takes place in Beijing, a very important city in China, where the president signs a very, very major trade deal worth \$250 billion, under which the United States will receive, among other things, a shipping container filled with four tons of Gucci purses that according to Chinese President Xi Jinping — an absolutely terrific guy — are “100 percent legit.”

But there is also alarming news from Asia in the form of yet another North Korean missile test, this one of a Hwasong-15 missile that Defense Department experts say is capable of reaching Washington, D.C., based on the fact that it landed on the Lincoln Memorial.

Meanwhile the list of prominent men accused of being sex pigs continues to grow as the scandal spreads beyond the entertainment industry to ensnare journalists and politicians. In the Alabama Senate race, Republican Roy Moore is accused of pursuing teenage girls and sexually touching one — who was 14 — when Moore was in his 30s. Despite calls for him to step down, a defiant Moore remains in the race, campaigning under the inspirational slogan “Yes he’s a pervert creep, but he’s OUR pervert creep.”

In other political news, Republican congressional leaders suffer a legislative setback when a Senate Budget Committee staffer notices that the GOP “tax-reform bill” is actually the owner’s manual for a Weber Genesis II SE-410 gas grill. The Republicans decide to continue pushing it anyway, because, in the words of “Mojo” McConnell, it contains “important safety information that will benefit the middle class.”

In sports, Geoffrey Kamworor of Kenya wins the New York City marathon in a time of 2:10:53, a feat made all the more impressive by the fact that he ran the final four miles with a panhandler clinging to his leg.

Speaking of impressive, in ...

DECEMBER

... congressional Republicans finally manage to pass tax legislation, which in its final form is expected to be approximately the same length as “War and Peace” in the original Russian but less intelligible to the average American taxpayer. The consensus of expert media commentators is that the legislation will reduce taxes for the middle class, increase taxes for the middle class, stimulate the economy, destroy the economy, make America great again, and LITERALLY KILL MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.

(Expert media commentators are the reason that much of the American public has decided to get its information on current events from memes.)

In federal groping news, Minnesota Democrat Al Franken announces that he will resign from the Senate on the grounds that, according to him, he didn’t do anything. Harassment allegations also end the careers of three members of the House, Republicans Trent Franks of Arizona and Blake Farenthold of Texas, and Democrat John Conyers of Michigan. With new scandals surfacing in Washington almost daily, there is talk that the nation may need to reinstitute the draft so that there will be a reserve supply of men available to run the government.

In Alabama, voters send Roy Moore creeping back to the mall.

Meanwhile, in a move that sparks outrage in the Middle East, President Trump announces plans to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Trump Tower, which the president says offers “a much more favorable lease.”

In financial news, Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, seeking to prop up his nation’s collapsing economy, announces the creation of a new digital currency called the “Petro,” which will be backed by a combination of oil reserves and a magic feather. The Illinois Legislature quickly follows suit, announcing that from now on the financially troubled state will pay its debts with the “Porko,” a digital currency backed by bratwurst.

Also something called “bitcoin” apparently is a big deal that is making people rich even though nobody has the faintest idea what the hell it is.

In business news, Amazon purchases the Pacific Ocean but pledges that it will remain open to the public “for the time being.”

On the Russian front, Mike Flynn pleads guilty to lying to the FBI and agrees to cooperate with the Mueller investigation. In response, six New York City fire companies are dispatched to a midtown Manhattan studio to hose down CNN’s expert panel. For its part, Fox launches a six-part Special Report on winter lawn maintenance. Expert media commentators agree that the Flynn story is an overhyped nothingburger as well as the smoking gun that will lead to IMPEACHMENT ANY DAY NOW.

Finally this hellish year, which by any standard of decency should have been canceled months ago, draws to a close. The American people, wearied by the endless scandals and the relentless toxic spew of partisan political viciousness, turn away from 2017 in disgust and look hopefully toward the new year, which by all indications will be calmer and saner.

We are of course joking. By all indications the nation is going to spend 2018 the same way it spent 2017, namely obsessing spitefully over 2016. So the best we can do is enjoy the brief reprieve offered by the holidays. In the spirit of the season, let’s try, as a nation, to forget about our differences, at least for a few days. Let’s remember that we’re all Americans, and let’s give our friends and loved ones, whatever their political views, a big old holiday hug.

No, scratch that. *No hugging!* Give your friends and loved ones a formal holiday handshake, then back away slowly with your hands raised in plain view.

Then have a happy new year. Or at least try.

**MARTY, I'M GOING BACK TO 2016
TO WATCH HILLARY LOSE AGAIN**



I don't understand why people
say hurtful things like,
"Want to go for a run"
or
"Try this kale."

DOORBELL



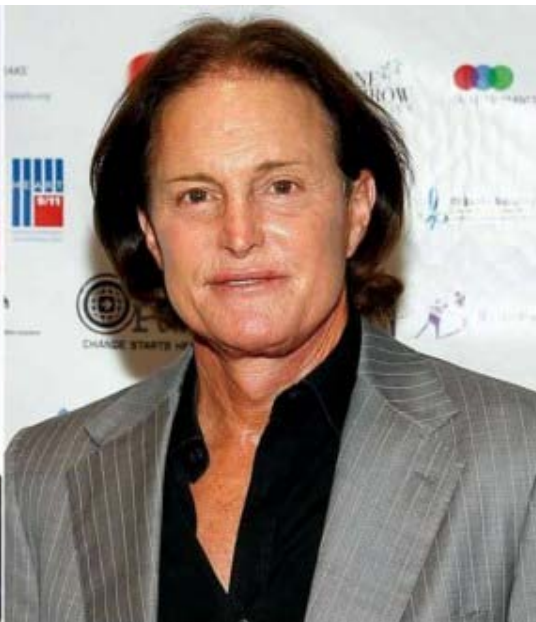
BURGLARY



SERIAL KILLER



CHEESE WRAPPER



CAITLYN JENNER CAME OUT TODAY AND SAID SHE WAS GROPED BY BRUCE JENNER OVER A SEVERAL YEAR PERIOD....

NOT A TRAMP STAMP

