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Big shoes to fill at practice inauguration



TRACY A. WOODWARD/THE WASHINGTON POST

A dry run for next week's elaborate Inauguration Day took place Sunday on the steps of the Capitol. Filling in for the first lady and president were Delandra Rollins and Serpico D. Elliott, on the left side, while Richard J. Bolin and Rachel M. Washko, on the right side, role-played the vice president and his wife. **Story, Page B1**

Souring ties with Russia threaten U.S. objectives

Ascendant Putin sees little reason to help Obama on crucial fronts

BY ANNE GEARAN

A poisonous unraveling of U.S. relations with Russia in recent months represents more than the failure of President Obama's first-term attempt to "reset" badly frayed bilateral relations. It threatens pillars of Obama's second-term foreign policy agenda as well.

From Syria and Iran to North Korea and Afghanistan, Russian President Vladimir Putin holds cards that he can use to help or hurt Obama administration objectives.

Obama badly needs Russian help to get U.S. troops and gear out of landlocked Afghanistan. He also wants Russian cooperation — or at least a quiet agreement not to interfere — on other international fronts.

Putin, however, appears to see little reason to help. Since his election last year to a third term as president, his political stock has risen among many Russians as he has confronted the West, and the United States in particular. The pro-democracy street demonstrations of a year ago have evaporated, leaving the former KGB officer

RUSSIA CONTINUED ON A11

Adoption ban protested

Russians accuse their government of playing politics with orphans. **A11**

Empty homes linger in Pr. George's

Some sit idle 2 or 3 years after foreclosures, much to their neighbors' dismay

BY ANNYS SHIN

The two-story brick house in Clinton had been vacant for two years when the vandalism began. First, a door was busted. Then a window was shattered. Then the air conditioning unit was stolen.

Neighbors tried for months to get the foreclosed house on Student Drive boarded up. Finally, Leroy Button looked out his window and saw the five-year-old house across the street engulfed in flames — a blaze being investigated as a possible arson.

The next morning, all that was left was a charred shell and a sense of frustration.

"Why they didn't board it up, I don't know," said Button, who summoned police to the house several times and tried contacting the loan servicer. "I said, 'You going to wait until the house catches fire?' And sure enough..."

This is what the end of a housing crisis looks like: steadily rising home prices, foreclosure filings at five-year lows, but also millions of vacant foreclosed homes.

Years after the housing market crashed, recovering communi-

ties from Las Vegas to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., continue to grapple with a glut of vacant properties, which drag down property values, attract vandals and drain public resources.

While Prince George's County escaped the kind of double-digit vacancy rates seen in Nevada and Florida, it had one of the highest percentages of vacant homes of any county in the Washington region.

About 7.4 percent of homes in Prince George's, one of the Maryland jurisdictions hit hardest by

VACANT CONTINUED ON A6

The 2013 Golden Globe Awards

"Argo" wins directing and best picture honors, with Showtime's "Homeland" earns three awards. More coverage is in Style on Page C1, and at washingtonpost.com/entertainment.

Among the winners:

MOVIES

- Picture, Drama: "Argo"
- Picture, Musical or Comedy: "Les Misérables"
- Best Actor, Drama: Daniel Day-Lewis, "Lincoln"
- Best Actress, Drama: Jessica Chastain, "Zero Dark Thirty"

TELEVISION

- Series, Drama: "Homeland"
- Series, Musical or Comedy: "Girls"
- Best Actress, TV Series, Drama: Claire Danes, "Homeland"



WINNERS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BEN AFFLECK, "ARGO"; ANNE HATHAWAY, "LES MISÉRABLES"; JESSICA CHASTAIN, "ZERO DARK THIRTY"; CLAIRE DANES, "HOMELAND" / PHOTOS BY GETTY IMAGES, REUTERS, EPA, AP

O'Malley to seek tougher gun laws

PLAN WOULD STRENGTHEN LICENSING

Md. governor to push for assault-weapon ban

BY AARON C. DAVIS AND JOHN WAGNER

Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley will seek to institute some of the nation's strictest gun-licensing requirements, ban assault weapons and restrict visitor access to schools in one of the most expansive government responses sought to last month's school shooting in Newtown, Conn.

Perhaps most controversially, O'Malley (D) will ask the General Assembly to force prospective gun owners to provide fingerprints to state police, complete a hands-on weapon-familiarization and gun-safety course, and undergo a background check to be licensed.

And the governor is seeking new measures to keep guns out of the hands of those with mental illness who show violent tendencies.

The coming gun-control debate in Annapolis, where Democrats reign, will contrast starkly with the discussion in Washington and the contortions that will be needed to get any gun-control legislation through a divided Congress.

O'Malley's plan, which administration officials described Sunday, positions him among a cadre of Democratic governors, including New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, seeking aggressive gun-control legislation in state capitols. The officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to provide the details, which have not been previously disclosed.

Regionally, O'Malley's efforts are likely to further widen a cultural divide on gun control between Maryland and Virginia, where Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) has been an outspoken critic of President Obama's call for stricter gun control after Newtown.

Responding to O'Malley's emerging plan Sunday, Maryland Republicans said the gun-control measures appeared ill-suited to prevent another Newtown and seemed more tailored to the

MARYLAND CONTINUED ON A6



Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley (D)

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg (R)

THE MAYOR'S PLAN

Bloomberg wants change in the GOP

BY JASON HOROWITZ

NEW YORK — Michael Bloomberg, America's most prominent and deep-pocketed advocate for gun control, would rather rehabilitate Republicans than oust them.

"Somebody got them the way they are now," the mayor of New York said in a recent interview as he sat in the bullpen offices of City Hall, surrounded by a buzzing staff, blinking Bloomberg terminals and clocks telling the same time in each of the five boroughs. "Why can't you change them?"

On Monday, Bloomberg will headline a summit on guns at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, another opportunity for the outspoken mayor to deliver an indictment of Washington's failure to do anything meaningful on the issue. Although the Democrat-turned-Republican-turned-independent says he practices a "noble and practical" brand of post-partisan politics, when it comes to gun laws, he is more aligned with one party than the other.

Democrats in the White House and in Congress are working closely with his advocacy group, Mayors Against Illegal Guns, to enact his gun-control agenda.

BLOOMBERG CONTINUED ON A4

Changes in cannabis laws create a new buzz for hemp

BY JULIET EILPERIN

In the cannabis plant family, hemp is the good seed. Marijuana, the evil weed. Michael Bowman, a gregarious Colorado farmer who grows corn and wheat, has been working his contacts in Congress in an attempt to persuade lawmakers that hemp has been framed, unfairly lumped with the stuff people smoke to get high.

Somehow over time, as Bowman's pitch goes, hemp, which is used to make paper, oils and a variety of useful products, was mistaken for its twin, marijuana — a.k.a. pot, chronic, blunt and

weed — a medicinal drug loaded with tetrahydrocannabinol that buzzes the mind. Hemp got caught up in the legendary crusade against pot popularized by the movie "Reefer Madness." All varieties of cannabis ended up on the most-wanted list, outlawed by Congress as well as lawmakers in other nations, inspiring people to kill it on sight.

Bowman's message is simple: Be sensible. "Can we just stop being stupid? Can we just talk about how things need to change?"

While the United States ranks

HEMP CONTINUED ON A10

IN THE NEWS



MOHAMED ABD EL GHANY/REUTERS

Back in court An Egyptian court ordered a retrial of ousted president Hosni Mubarak, granting an appeal of his life sentence. **A7**

European vote Italy is lurching toward elections next month with Pier Luigi Bersani's center-left coalition running substantially ahead. **A7**

THE REGION
Allies of U-Va. Rector Helen E. Dragas are pressing state lawmakers to keep her on the university's governing board, more than six months after she precipitated a leadership crisis with a botched attempt to oust the school's president. **B1**

Four of five riders who've purchased new SmarTrip cards from Metro haven't claimed their \$3 rebates since the incentive was announced in September. **B1**

THE NATION
Colin Powell, the former secretary of state, defended former Nebraska senator Chuck Hagel's qualifications to be the next de-

fense secretary, saying that he expects him to be confirmed. **A2**

THE WORLD
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised to follow through with plans for settlement construction in a key West Bank area after police evicted scores of Palestinian protesters who had set up a tent camp there. **A8**

Police in the northern Indian state of Punjab arrested seven men in the gang rape of a 29-year-old woman who was traveling alone on a bus, less than four weeks after the brutal rape of a woman on a New Delhi bus created a national outcry. **A8**

INSIDE

SPORTS
NFL playoffs The New England Patriots and the Atlanta Falcons head to the AFC and NFC championship games. **D1**

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