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The Daily 202

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

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John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

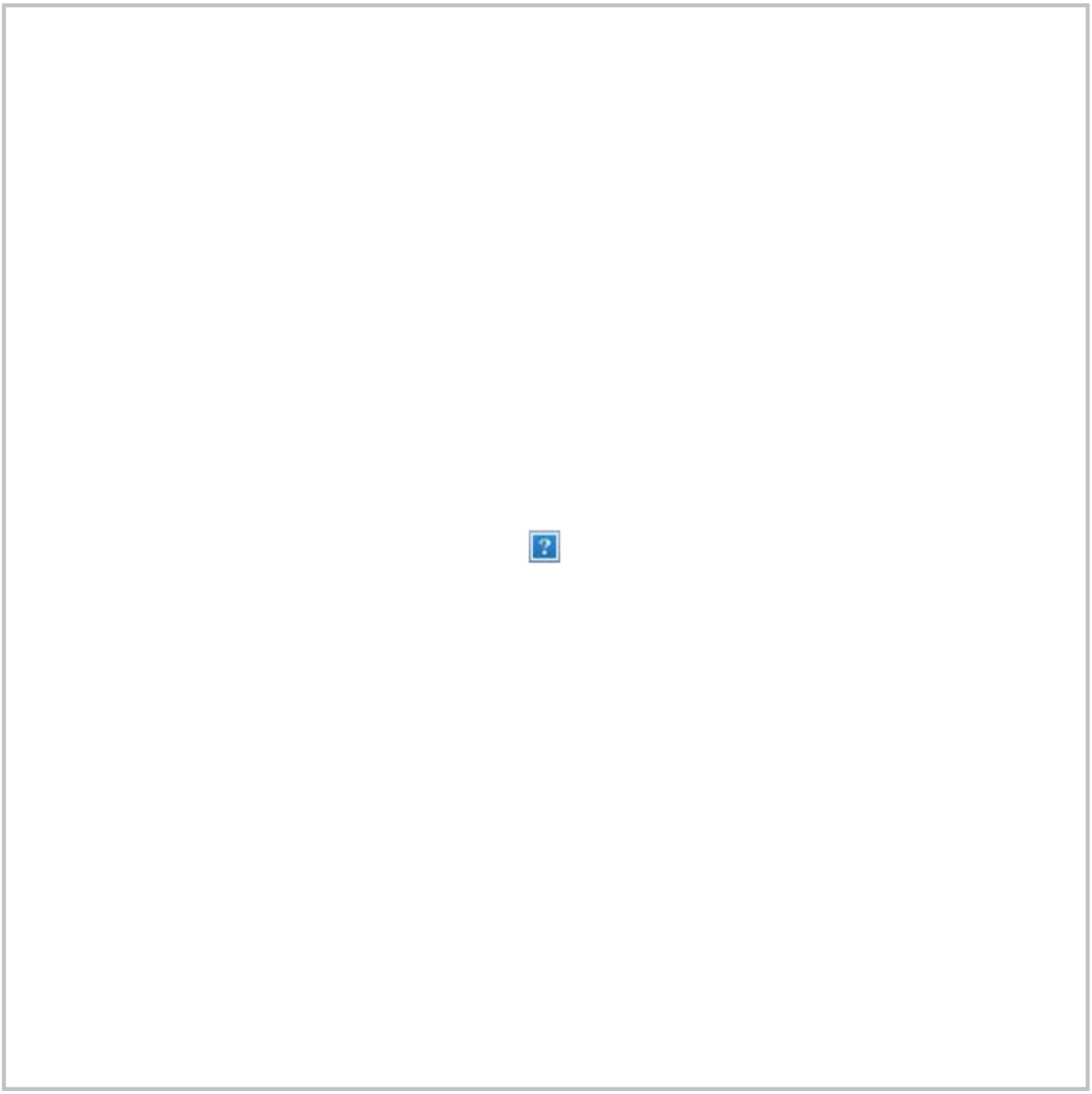
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

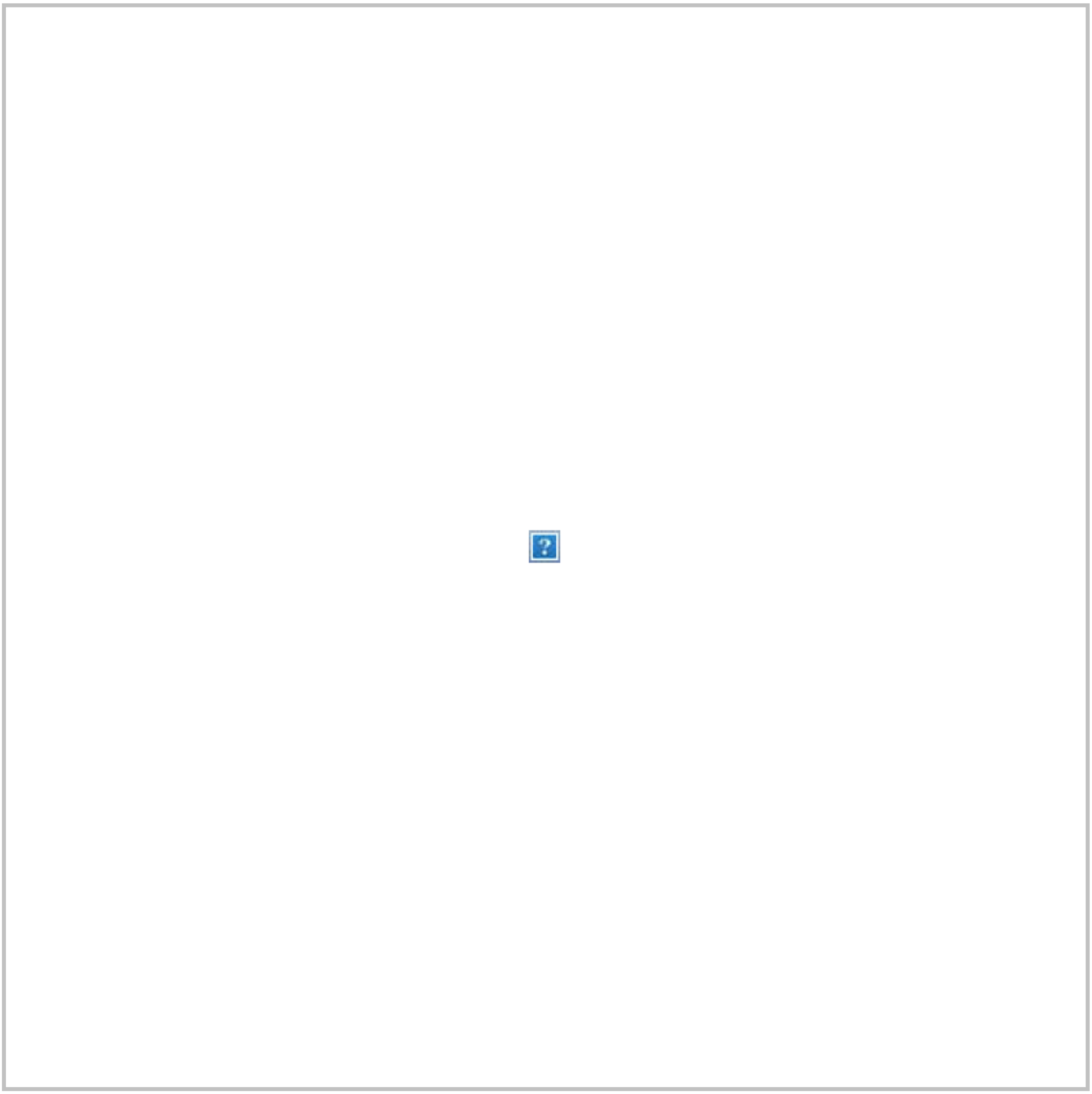
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

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John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

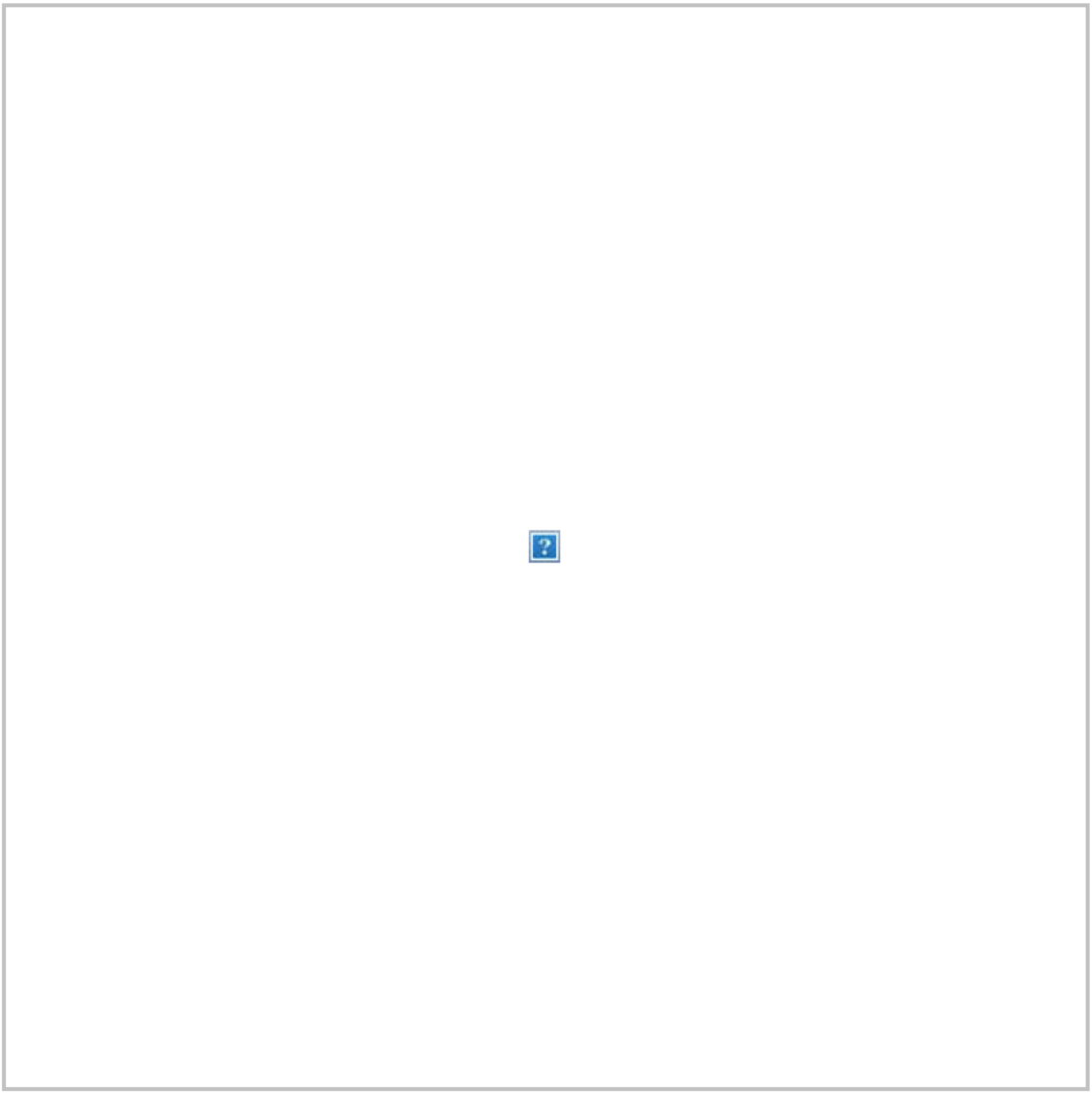
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

Sign up to receive the newsletter.

WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

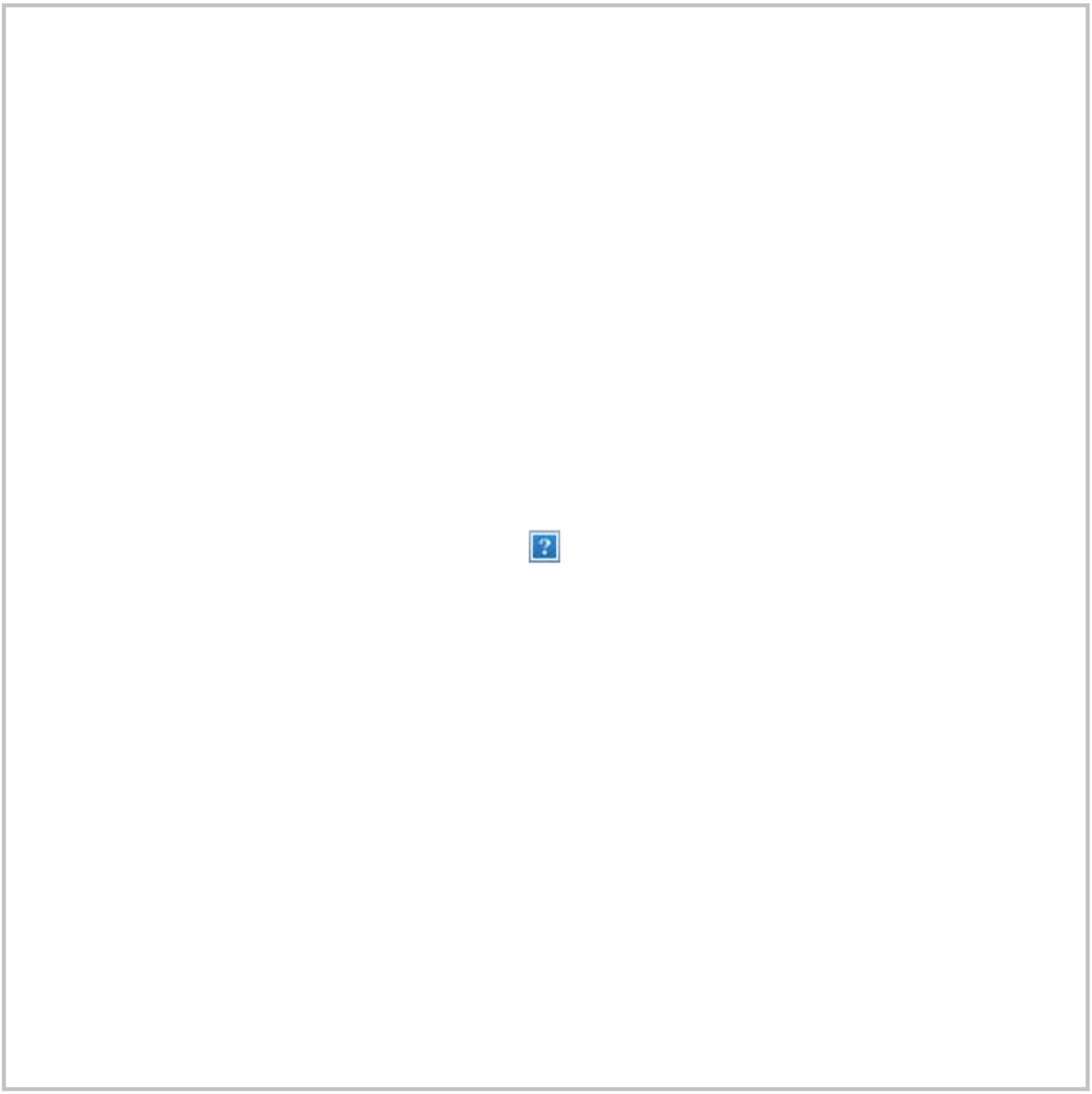
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

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John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

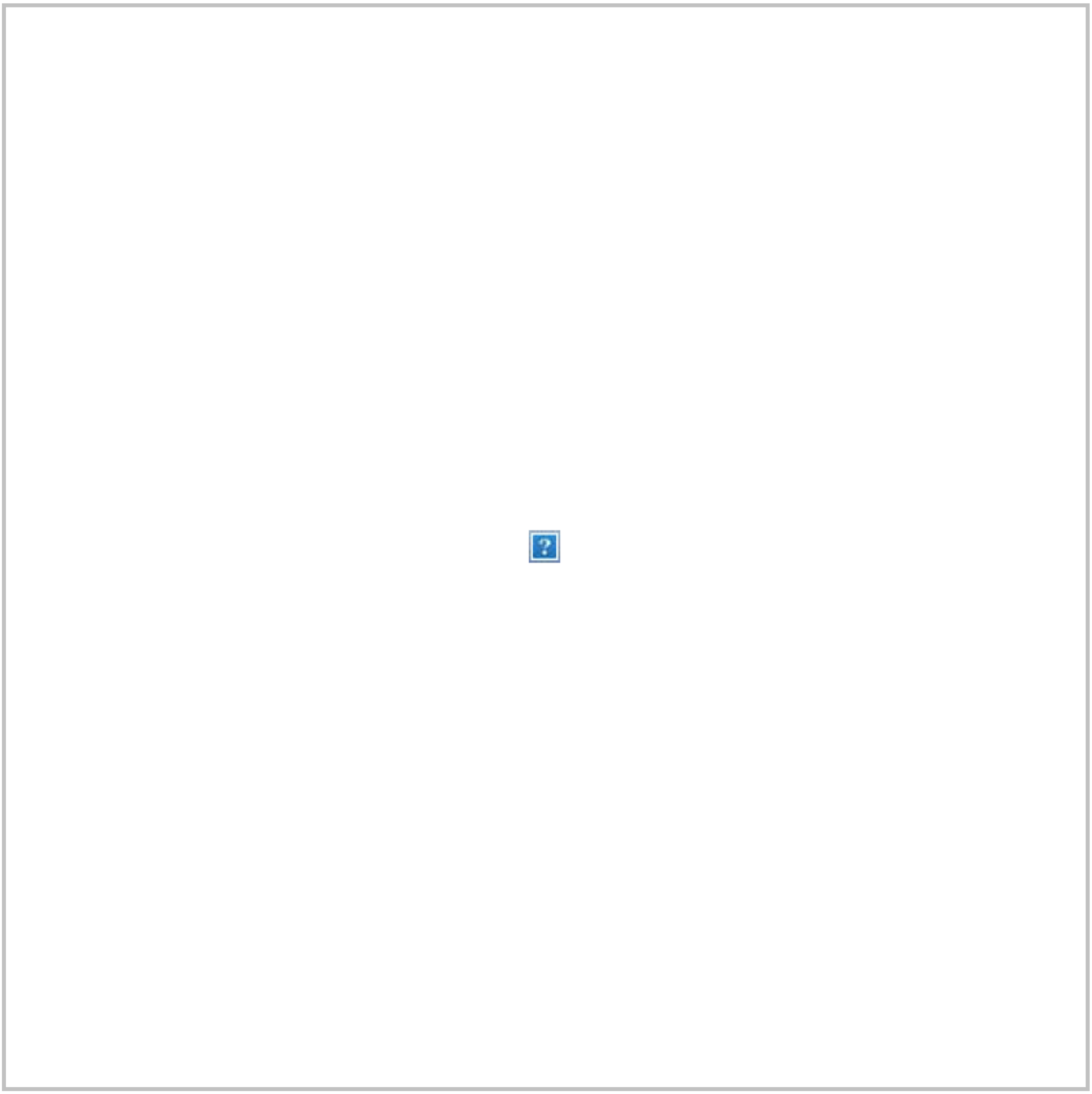
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

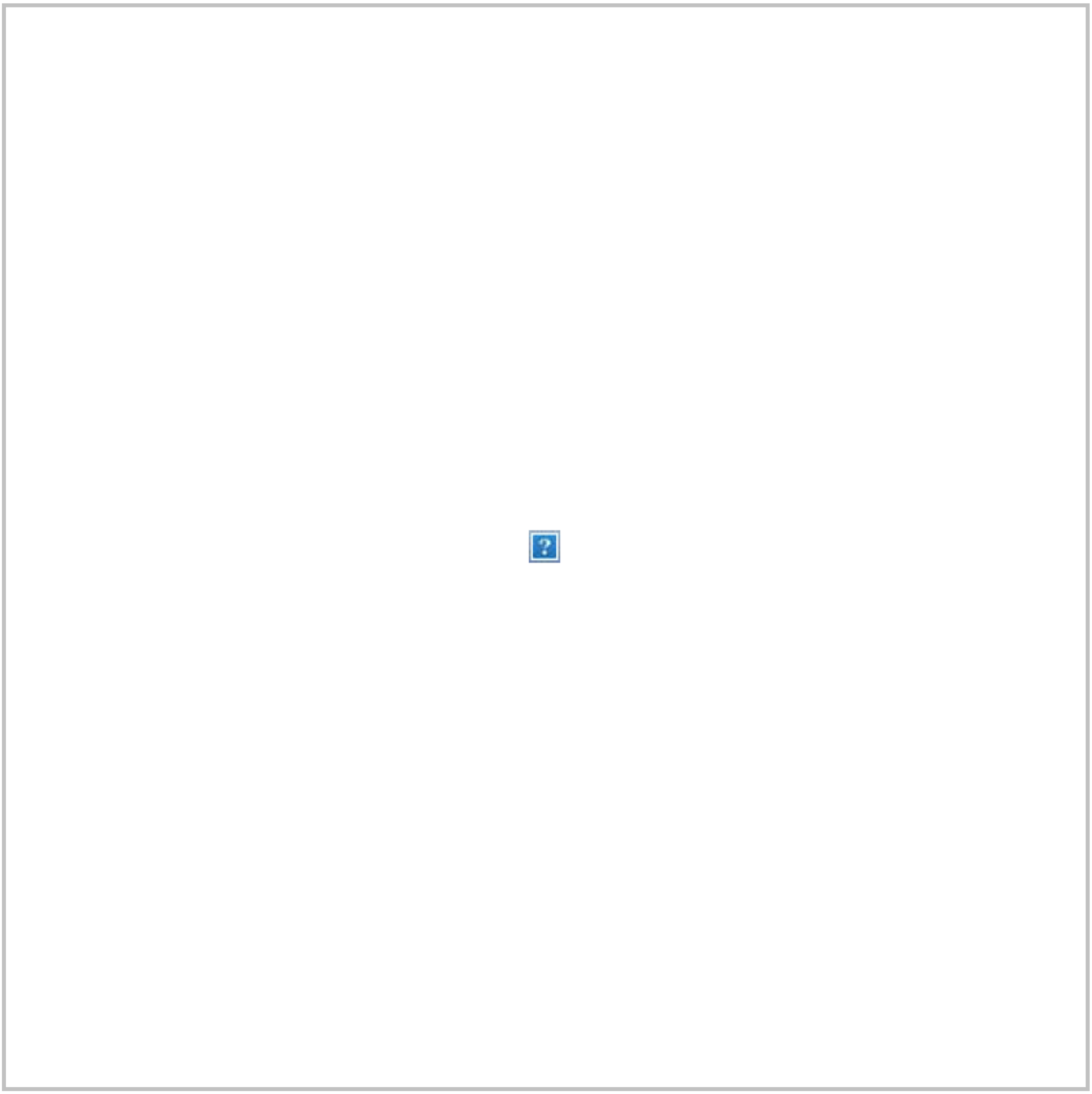
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

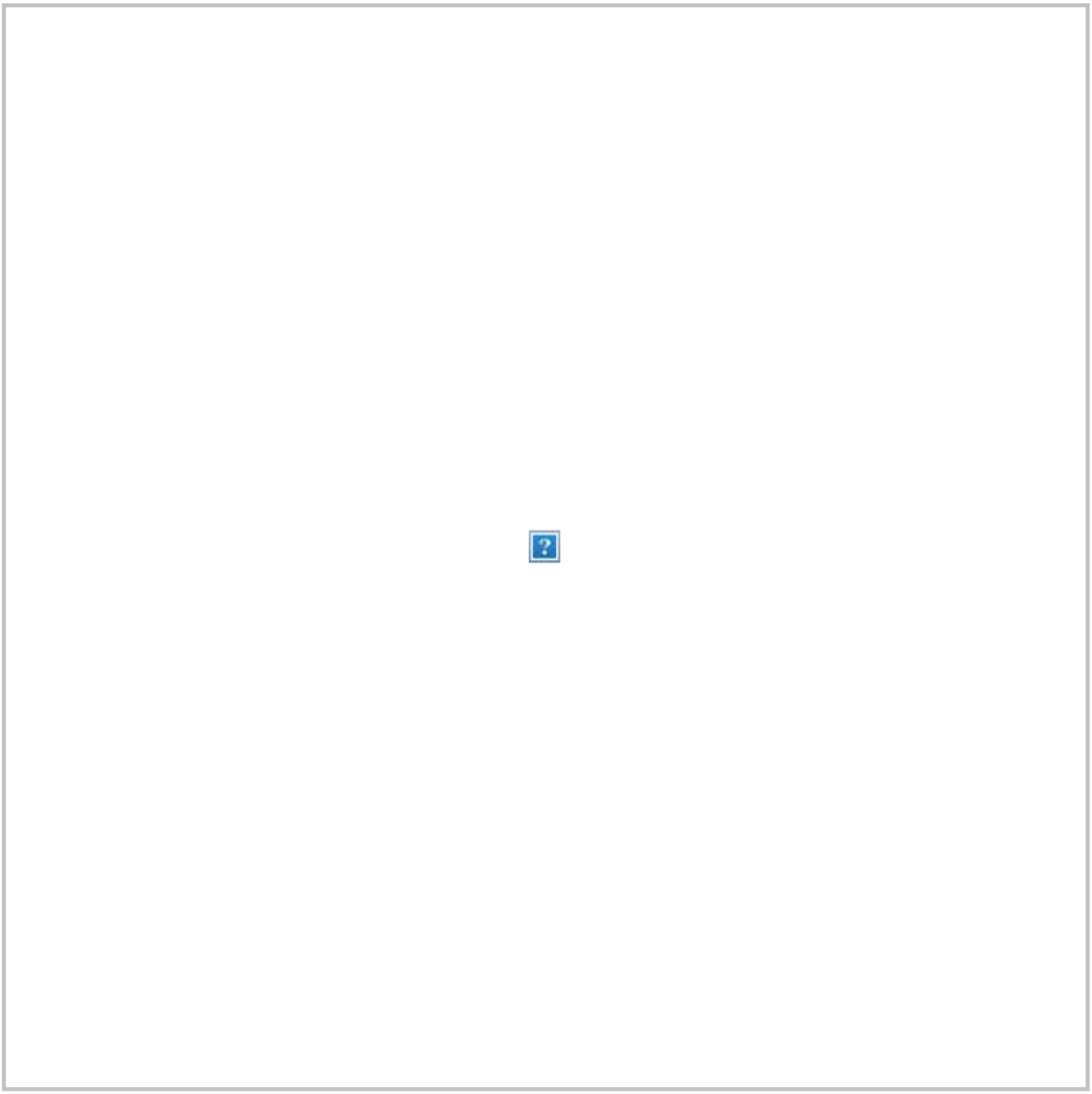
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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To: [redacted]
Subject: us of tonight's presidential debate
Date: Wednesday, October 19, 2016 9:50:12 AM

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The Daily 202

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

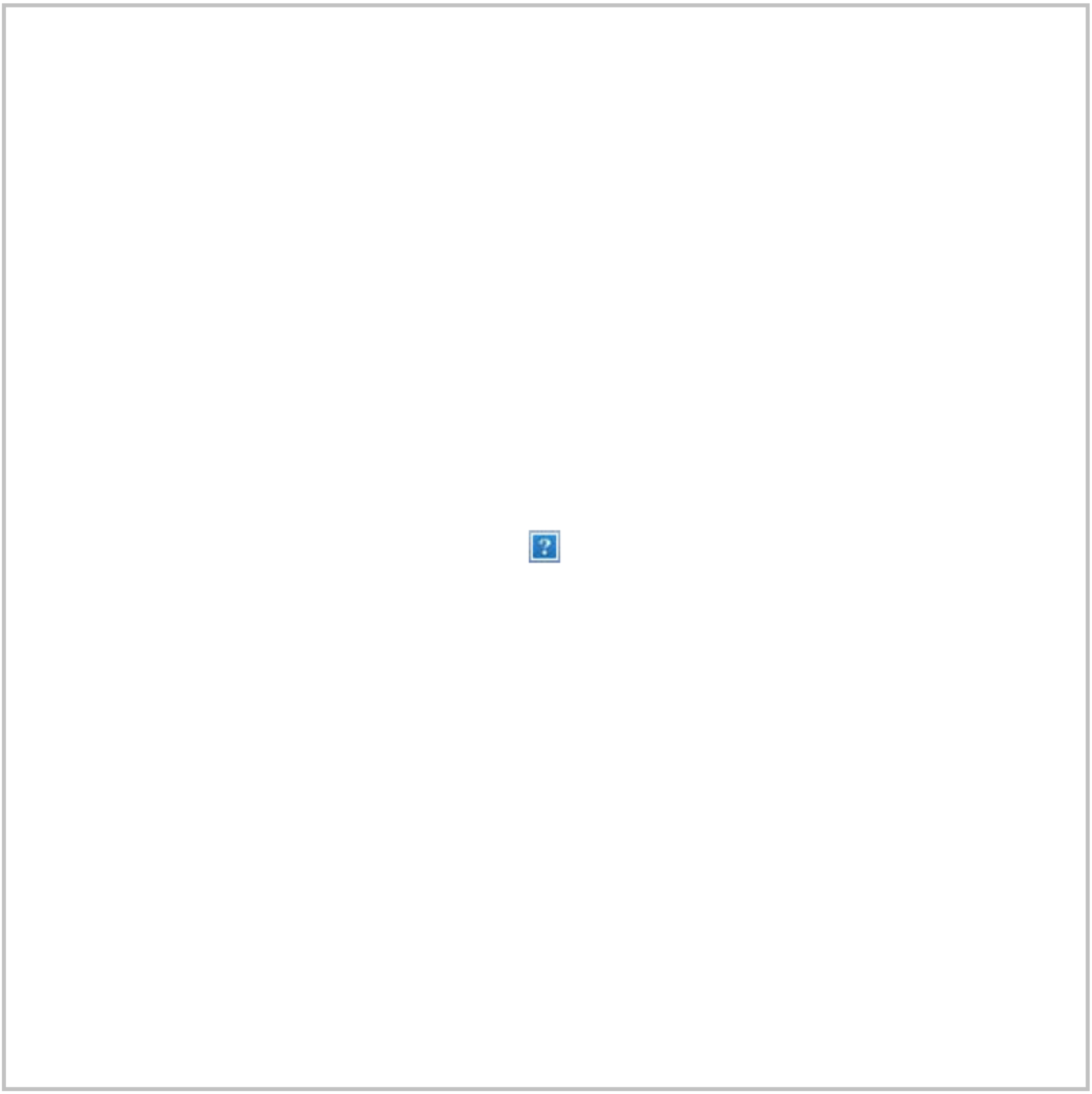
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

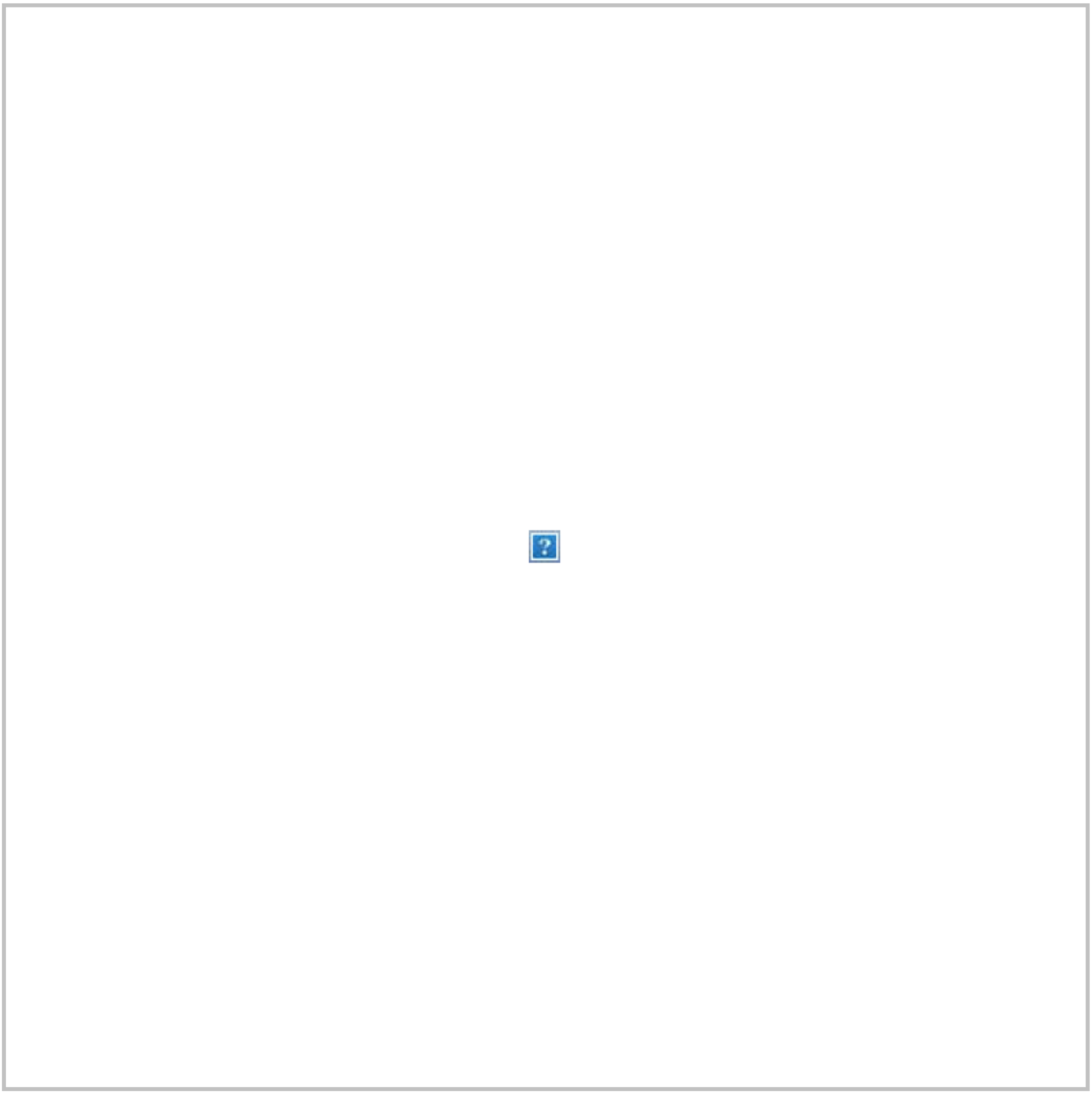
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

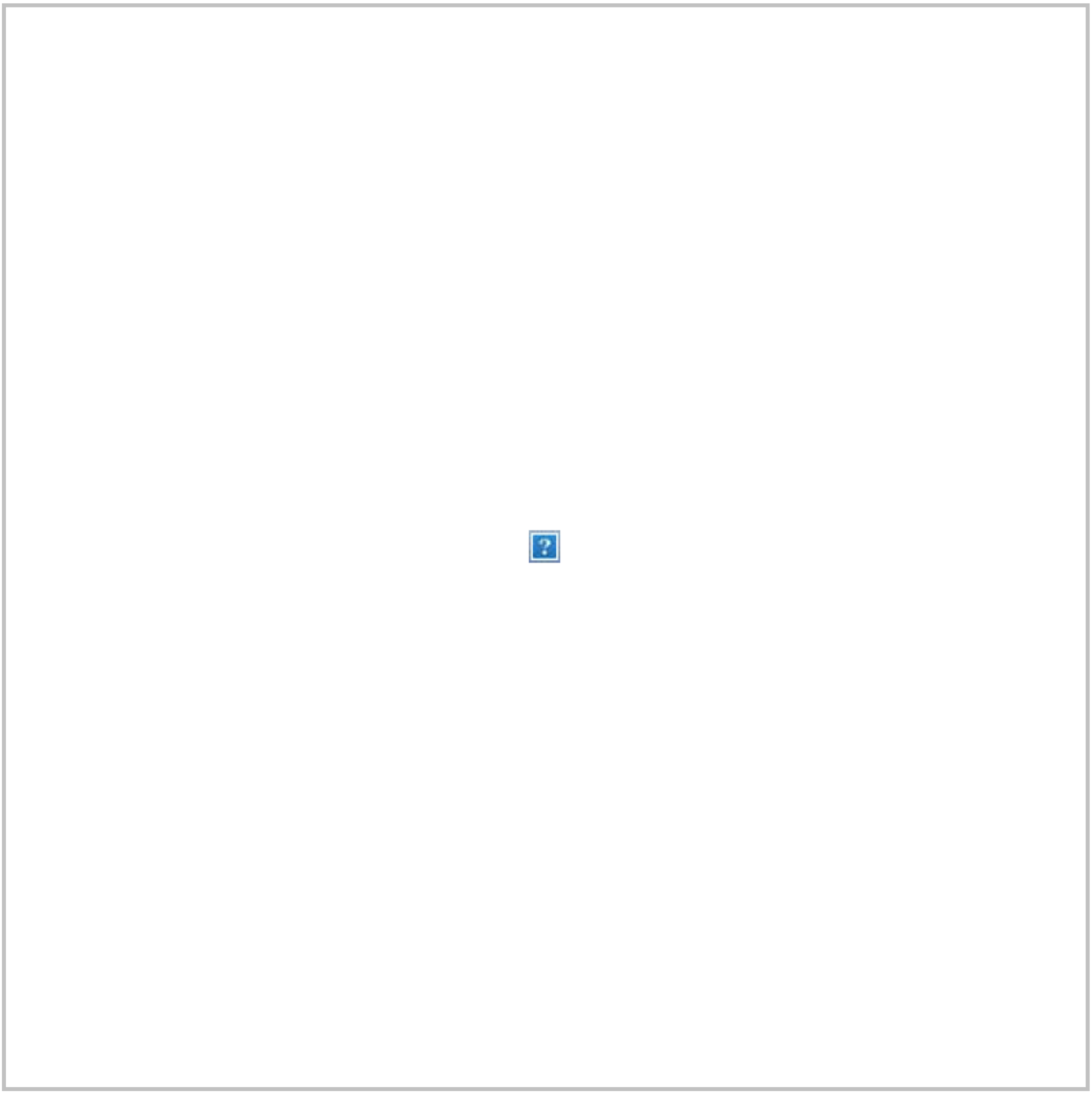
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

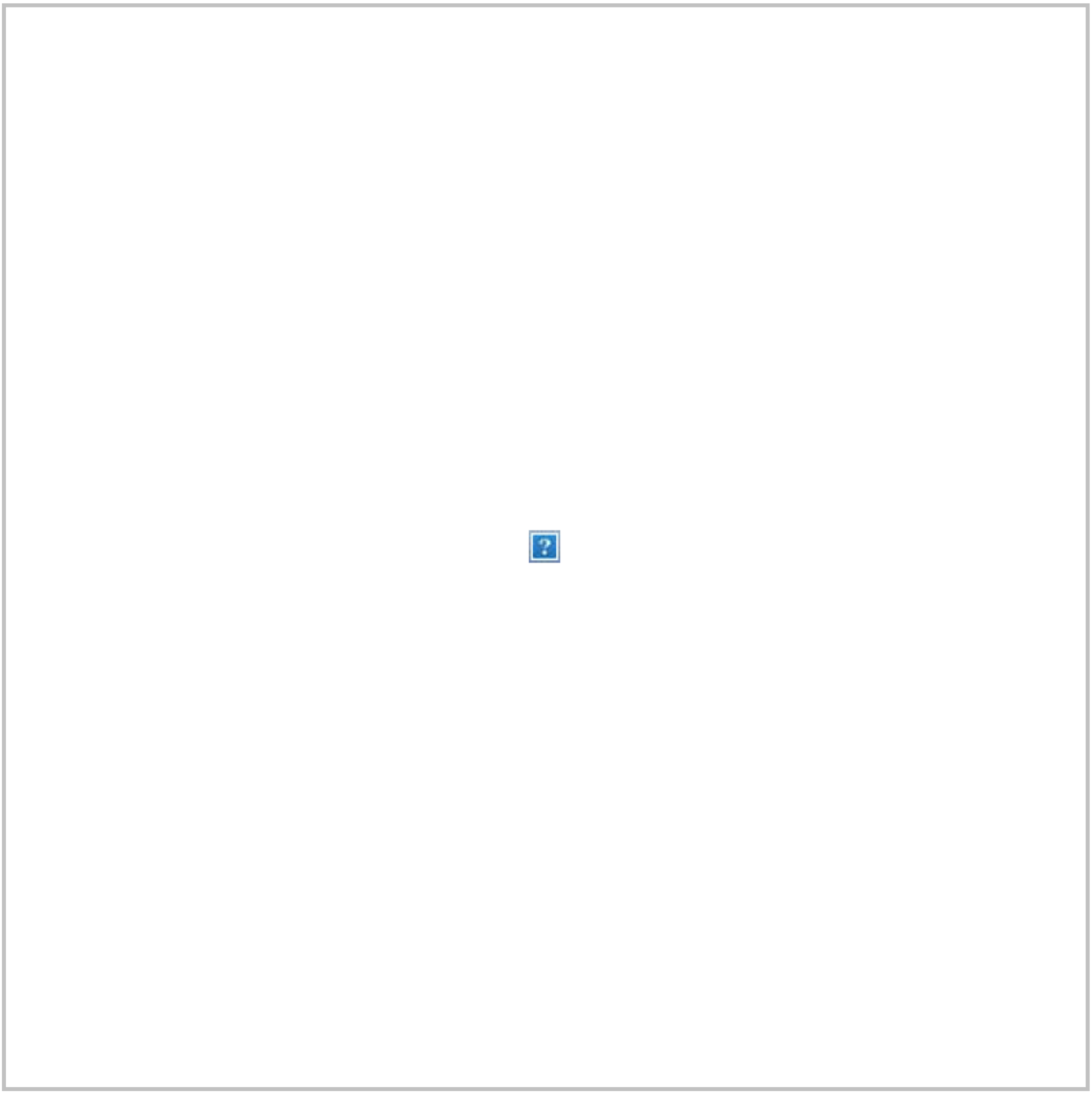
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Daily 202

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

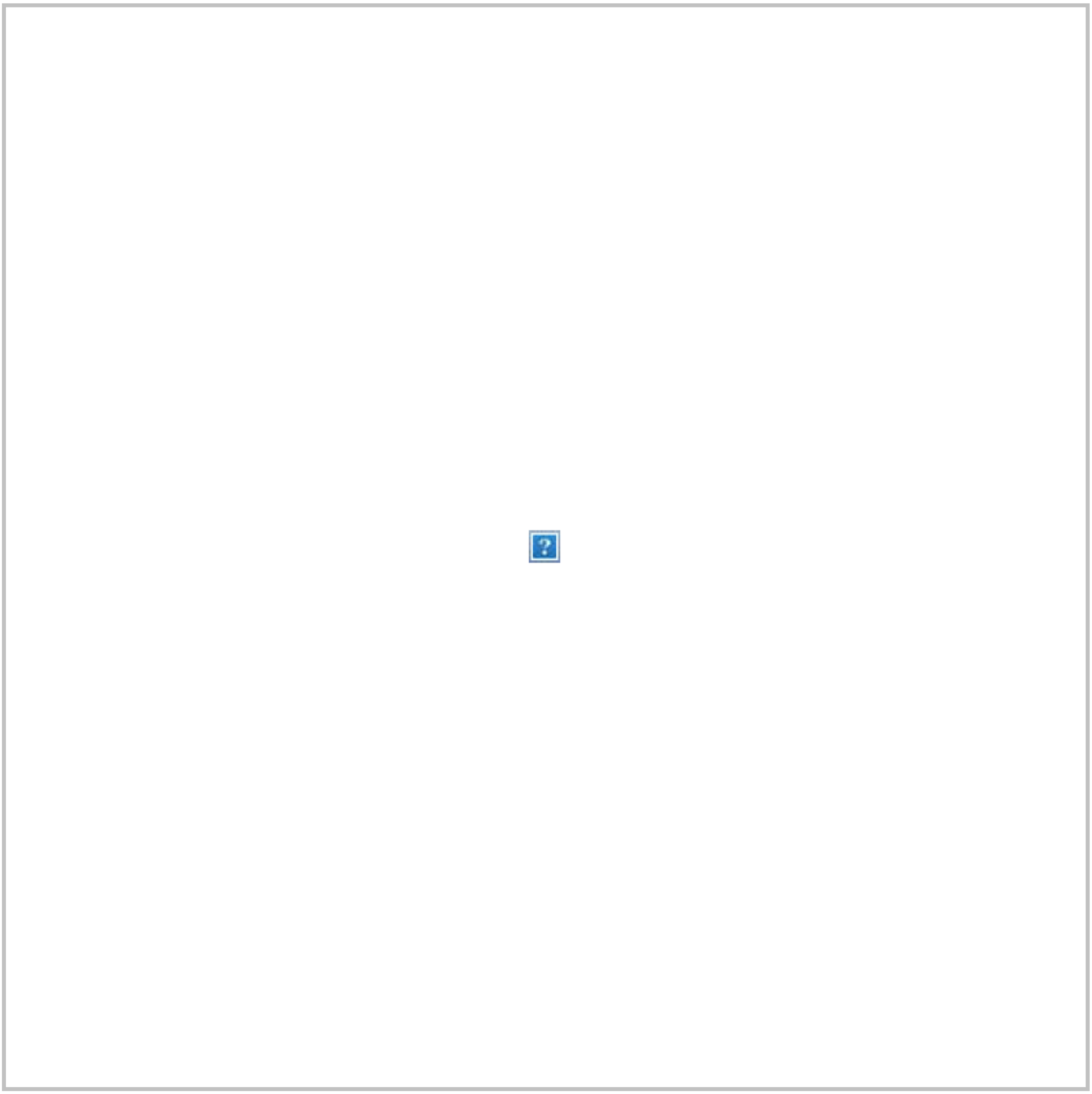
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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Date: Wednesday, October 19, 2016 9:53:59 AM

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

Sign up to receive the newsletter.

WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

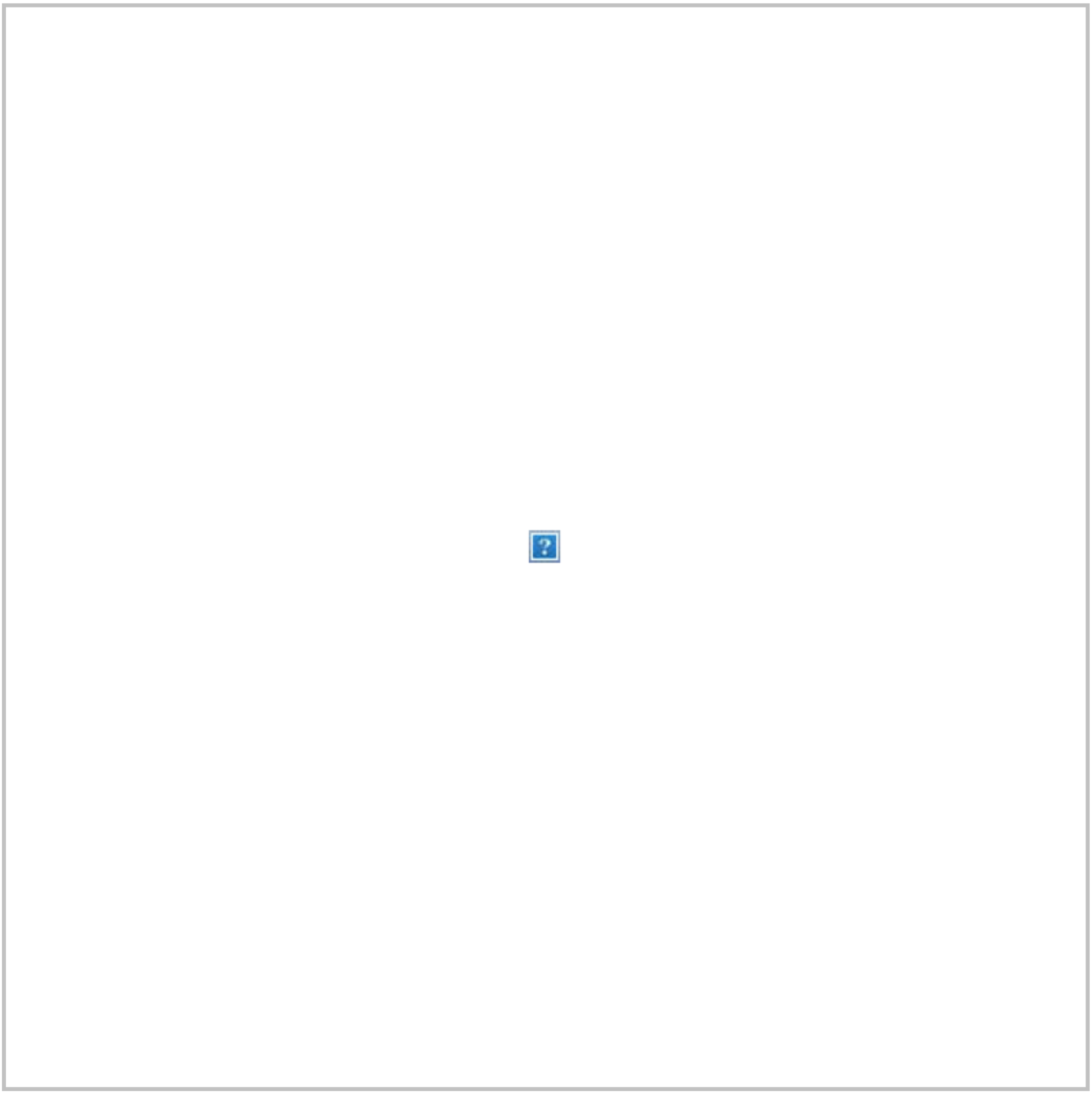
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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From:
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The Daily 202

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

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John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

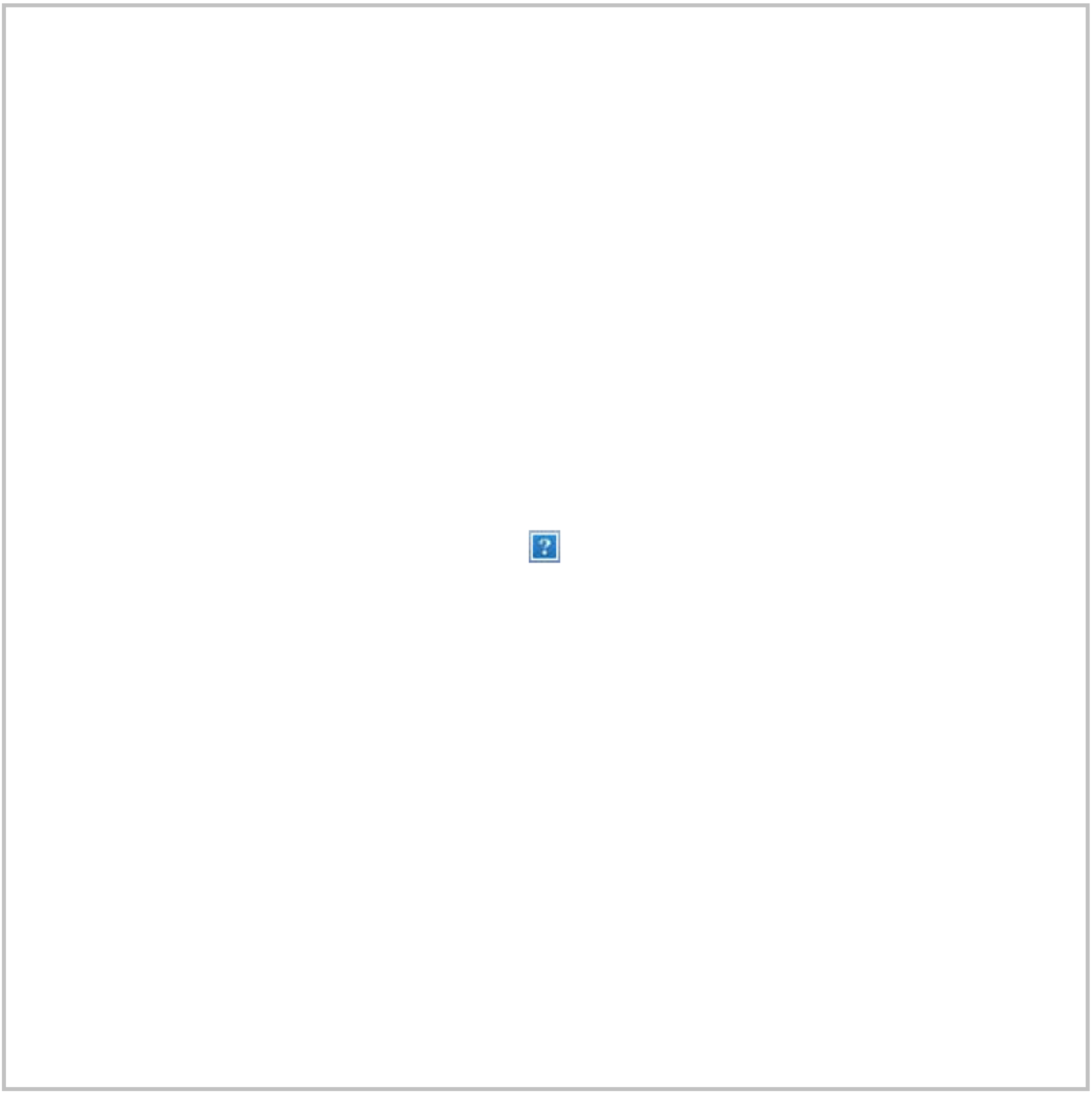
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

ADVERTISEMENT

John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"

NEWS YOU CAN USE IF YOU LIVE IN D.C.:

-- "A solidly summerlike day, with partly to mostly sunny skies and noticeable humidity," the Capital Weather Gang forecasts. "Highs head for the mid-80s, with light winds from the west-southwest around 5-10 mph. The record highs to beat for the day? — 88 at DCA, 83 at Dulles, and 82 at BWI."

-- The Wizards beat the Cleveland Cavaliers 96-91.

-- The Capitals beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0

-- A Richmond federal appeals court agreed to postpone oral arguments in a case over the Washington Redskins' trademark registration, further delaying a long-running case that pits the NFL team against the U.S. patent office and Native Americans groups find the team's name insulting. (Ian Shapira)

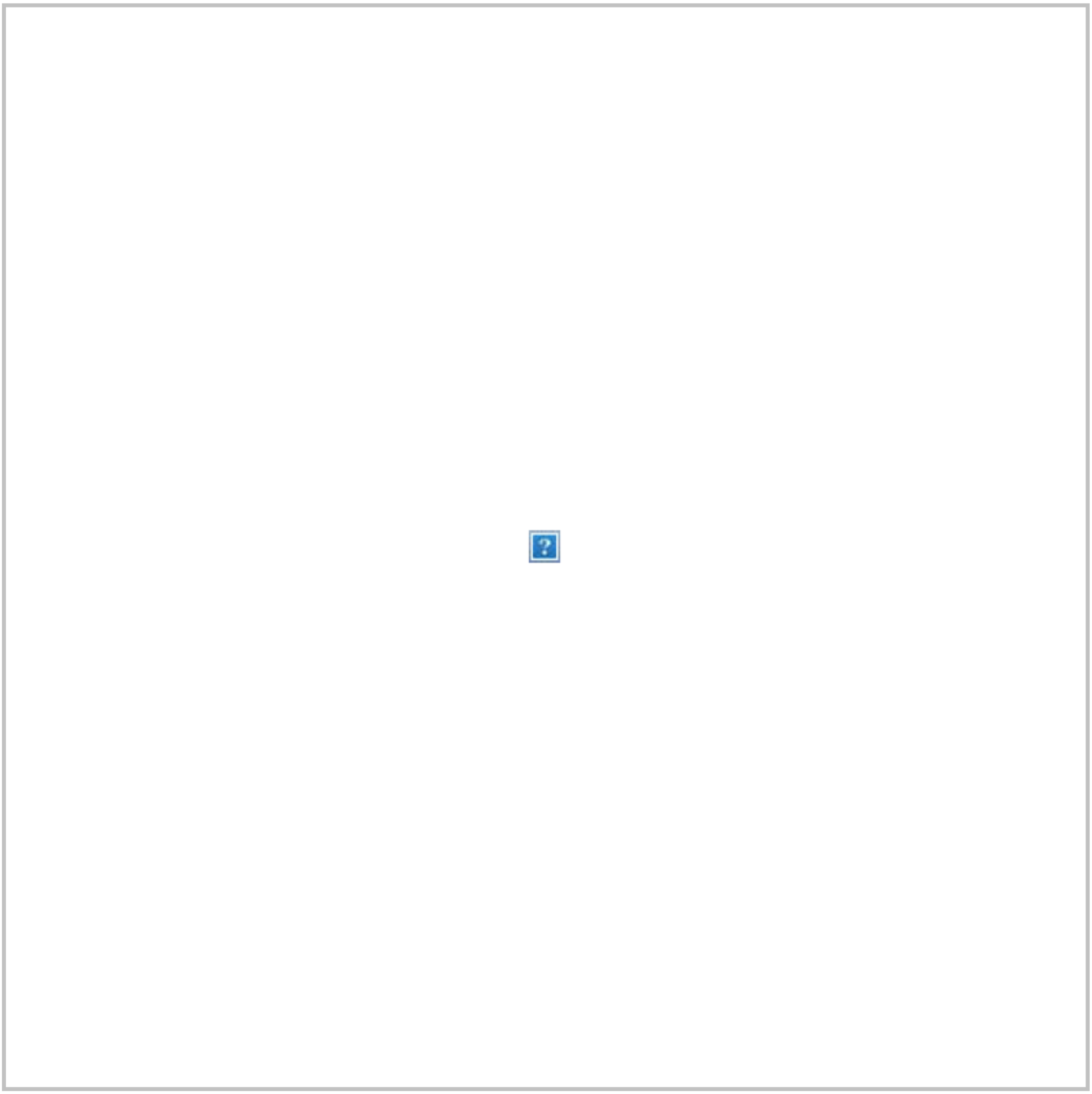
-- A high school senior was fatally stabbed on a D.C. Metrobus Tuesday evening, reportedly following a long-running dispute with another young woman over a cell phone. Police said the suspect has been taken into custody and charged. (Peter Hermann)

-- Marriott International announced plans to relocate its headquarters to downtown Bethesda, deciding to remain in Montgomery County after getting commitment on a $62 million publicly funded initiative. (Jonathan O'Connell)

VIDEOS OF THE DAY:

Tony Award-winning actress Laura Benanti returned to “The Late Show With Stephen Colbert” last night to reprise her spot-on parody of Melania Trump — this time with some uncomfortable Billy Bush references:

Watch as celebrities arrive at the White House for the Italian state dinner:



Celebrities arrive for Italian state dinner

"Dreamer" Juan Salazar, who came to the U.S. when he was seven, contemplates what's at stake in this election for him and his undocumented family members:

A family in fear: 'Us being separated…is just devastating'

Judy Shepard, whose son Matthew Shepard was murdered in Laramie, Wyoming, in 1998, because he was gay, cut a 1-minute spot for the Clinton Super PAC Priorities USA. “I know what can happen as the result of hate,” she says to camera. “So when I see the hate that Donald Trump has brought to his campaign for president, it terrifies me. … Words have an influence, violence causes pain, hate can rip us apart. I know what can happen as the result of hate, and Donald Trump should never be our president.”

Hate

Bloomberg made an Ocean's Eleven-style explainer about whether the election is rigged:

Ocean's Election: Rigging the System, Vegas-Style

Kathy Griffin taped a video against Trump (warning: profanity):

Mirrors | Kathy Griffin | Hillary Clinton

Viceland also used adult language in this Instagram video against Trump:

Compare some of what Clinton says in her stump speech to what she told Goldman Sachs bankers behind closed doors:

How some of Clinton’s private speeches compare to her public stances

Watch Obama speak about Trump's "whining":

President Obama: "I'd invite Mr. Trump to stop whining..." (C-SPAN)

Finally, in this video, Canadians tell Americans why our country is already great:

Canadians 'tell America it's great'

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The Supreme Court will be a focus of tonight's

presidential debate

Donald Trump's plane passes Hillary Clinton's plane at McCarran International Airport yesterday. The candidates have come to Las Vegas for their third and final debate. (Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images)

With Breanne Deppisch

THE BIG IDEA: The Supreme Court is one of six main topics that will be covered during tonight's final debate at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas. The late Antonin Scalia's seat continues to sit empty. An evenly-divided court has begun its new term under a cloud of uncertainty. Assuming Hillary Clinton wins, it remains unclear whether Republicans will try to confirm Merrick Garland during the lame-duck session to prevent her from putting up someone who is younger and more liberal next year.

The debate took on new significance this week when John McCain boasted during a radio interview that Republicans would automatically oppose whomever Clinton nominates. "I promise you that we will be united against any Supreme Court nominee that Hillary Clinton, if she were president, would put up," the Arizona senator said. "I promise you!"

Attacked by his Democratic challenger, McCain's spokeswoman released a statement walking back his comment. The senator will "thoroughly examine the record of any Supreme Court nominee put

before the Senate," she said. McCain then awkwardly avoided a local TV reporter who tried to follow up.

Republicans, who have struggled to convince voters that they are capable of governing, talked a big game in years past about the need to be more than just "the party of no." That messaging is gone now. The prospect of four more years in the wilderness suggests that they will move back toward unapologetic obstruction.

Right now, however, they are in damage control mode. **Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, who is up for reelection in Iowa, promised yesterday to not automatically "stonewall" any Clinton pick.** "If that new president happens to be Hillary, we can't just simply stonewall," Grassley said on a conference call with local press.

This is a very delicate balancing act. Vulnerable Republican incumbents are trying to convince people who are reluctantly voting for Clinton to support them by promising that they'll be a check and balance on the excesses of the Clinton presidency. **One man's "check and balance," however, is another man's "obstruction." Regardless of how you play it, the bottom line is that Republicans are trying to save their majority by promising more gridlock.**

If Republicans hold the Senate, Mitch McConnell will control the floor schedule and Grassley will continue to have the Judiciary gavel. So they technically could do exactly what they have for the past nine months with Garland.

Democrats are now favored to win the Senate majority. Even if they run the table, however, they'll only control around 53 seats. That is nowhere near filibuster proof. The question then becomes: Which Republicans would cross over to vote for a President Clinton's SCOTUS picks? Could a Majority Leader Chuck Schumer cobble together 60 votes? Or does he invoke the nuclear option and change the rules to allow Supreme Court nominees to be confirmed by a simple majority? **Going nuclear will probably be the easier course, both politically and procedurally**, especially because the Republican blockade of Garland has cost GOP leaders much of their moral standing to oppose such a gambit.

Contrary to the will of the brilliant men who devised the Constitution, the Senate is increasingly becoming a majoritarian institution. Conservatives, who in principle should be alarmed by this trend, have shortsightedly accelerated it.

A student standing in for Hillary is captured on the large monitor during a rehearsal for the debate last night at UNLV. (David Goldman/AP)

-- There are two very important SCOTUS questions that the candidates have avoided giving direct answers to:

Will Clinton re-nominate Garland? Watch for her to once again dodge on this. She's called him "extremely well qualified," and she's relying heavily on Barack Obama to get her across the finish line in November. The president sees getting Garland through during the lame-duck as a top priority and a legacy achievement, but Clinton privately wants to pick someone who is younger and more liberal than

the 63-year-old moderate.

Will Trump commit to nominating only people who are on his list of 21 potential picks? Aides have said the list is definitive, but the reality TV star has suggested during interviews that he might go another direction. And he has a very long history of not being true to his word. A few of the people Trump floated have chastised him. Utah Sen. Mike Lee, on the second installment of Trump's list, subsequently called on the GOP nominee to drop out. And, amusingly, federal appellate court Judge Diane Sykes (who was in the first batch of names released by Trump) ruled earlier this month against Mike Pence. She said the Indiana governor cannot interfere with the distribution of federal funds to resettle Syrian refugees in his state.

Trump speaks in Grand Junction, Colorado. (George Frey/Getty)

-- For many conservative intellectuals, stopping Clinton from appointing Scalia's replacement is no longer a good enough reason to support Trump. Among the Republican politicians who have capitulated, such as Ted Cruz, holding the Scalia seat is a favorite talking point to justify supporting someone who they privately see as dangerously authoritarian. But 29 top conservative legal scholars have signed onto a letter arguing that it is not enough. The "Originalists against Trump" do not believe Trump would protect the Constitution. And they do not trust him to actually pick from his list of

21. “More importantly, we do not trust him to respect constitutional limits in the rest of his conduct in office, of which judicial nominations are only one part,” they write. The group understands that the alternative is Clinton. “Yet our country’s commitment to its Constitution is not so fragile that it can be undone by a single administration or a single court,” they conclude. (Read the full letter here.)

Our Robert Barnes notes that the signatories include a Northwestern law professor who was one of the founders of the Federalist Society, Steven G. Calabresi; Post columnist George F. Will; and a well-regarded conservative law professor at New York University and the University of Chicago, Richard Epstein. “**The effort was organized by Duke University law professor Stephen E. Sachs and University of Chicago law professor William Baude, a pair of former clerks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.**”

Something to ponder: Will Roberts vote for Trump? He obviously wants to regain his working majority, but he also hails from Indiana – just like Gonzalo Curiel, the federal judge whom Trump leveled repeated, racially-loaded attacks against. We’ll never know…

Bill greets Melania before the start of the last debate. (Paul J. Richards/AFP/Getty Images)

MORE ON WHAT TO EXPECT IN VEGAS TONIGHT:

-- The other five topics that will get covered from 9 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Eastern are immigration, entitlements/debt, the economy, foreign policy and each candidate's "fitness" to serve as president.

-- Trump's scorched-earth strategy continues. He is bringing as his guests Obama's estranged half-brother Malik and the mother

of a Benghazi victim who has accused Clinton of “murdering” her son. It is unclear whether the campaign will reveal more surprise guests today. Clinton is bringing billionaires Mark Cuban and Meg Whitman in an effort to rattle Trump over his wealth. (Jose DelReal)

-- Clinton spent much of this week off the trail preparing for their final showdown, a strategy which Trump mocked at a Colorado rally. He told supporters she was actually at home resting instead. "You know what the debate prep is? It's resting. It's lying down, going to sleep," he said. (Jenna Johnson)

-- The Clinton campaign has requested that Bill and Melania do not shake hands before tonight's debate. Last time, Trump planned to parade three women who accused Clinton of sexual assault into the family seating area and force the former president to shake their hands as he crossed the room. (Jeremy Peters and Maggie Haberman, The New York Times)

Chris Wallace moderated the first Republican primary debate in Aug. 2015 in Cleveland. (Aaron Josefczyk/Reuters)

-- "Chris Wallace's Debate Role Is a Bright Spot in a Dark Year for Fox," by the New York Times's Michael Grynbaum: Chris is the first Fox journalist to take charge of a general election face-off. "It would be the most consequential night of Fox News's year — if the network had not just endured the most traumatic period in its two-decade history. [For] the team of Fox anchors and producers (in Vegas) this week, Mr. Wallace's star turn is a welcome source of pride. And, maybe, some relief. The selection of Mr. Wallace, a veteran broadcaster with a reputation for tough, mischief-making

questions, was particularly bolstering for Fox's news division, which has viewed itself as an unfairly maligned alternative to the network's stable of conservative commentators like Mr. Hannity and Bill O'Reilly."

-- Politico's Glenn Thrush preemptively declares that "Clinton will be on the defensive": "Trump's fitness to lead has, rightly, been the major focus of his conventionally lousy first debate and the national disgrace of his second one. But here's some good news for him! Trump has done such a masterful job of handing Clinton the election that the inevitable focus now is on her! America wants, demands, that final kick-the-tires test, as Barack Obama said of the process – and significant questions remain about her honesty, integrity, judgment and trustworthiness. … Beatings, like bossa novas, have a predictable rhythm. **Trump's beating (however deserved or self-inflicted) has gone on for too long in terms of the cyclical attention span of modern media, and it's simply Hillary's turn."**

-- Trump's odds of turning around his campaign tonight are steep, the Boston Globe's Matt Viser posits: "Clinton arrives in Las Vegas for the final debate like a poker player holding a full house, confident and careful. Trump is furiously raising his bet, acting as if he's holding a hot hand, when polls say all he's got is a pair of jacks."

-- Republicans are praying that Trump does not once again take Clinton's bait, per the Wall Street Journal's Michael Bender and Laura Meckler: "Democrats want Clinton to articulate a positive vision for the country, rising above the allegations of sexual misconduct and dishonesty that have permeated this election year. …

Republicans say Trump needs to focus on his popular anti-establishment message and avoid placing any more attention on controversies over his treatment of women or rifts with fellow Republicans. ‘For once he needs to make this a race that’s not just about him,’ said GOP consultant and former Romney adviser Kevin Madden. ‘Clinton wants this race to be a referendum on Trump and his lack of temperament, and every time she lays the bait he never disappoints in taking it.’”

Welcome to the Daily 202, **PowerPost's** morning newsletter.
With contributions from Elise Viebeck (@eliseviebeck).

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WHILE YOU WERE SLEEPING:

President Obama greets Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi at the White House. (EPA/Michael Reynolds)

-- President Obama hosted his final state dinner, honoring Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and his wife at a celebratory -- yet nostalgic -- reception. "If there was a collective emotion that defined the night it'd be a mix of joy and pain," Helena Andrews-Dyer and Emily Heil wrote. "Everyone involved in the Obamas' last black tie gala felt it. From guest chef Mario Batali, who said that knowing this dinner is the last adds its own brand of pride and pressure, to the president himself, who called the swanky swan song 'a bittersweet moment.' Held in a tent on the South Lawn dripping with chandeliers

and dotted with mirrored tables to conjure up the Italian 'fresco' technique, the evening featured a stroll through the first lady's kitchen garden … a four-course meal prepared by Batali and a performance by Gwen Stefani … But despite the night's obvious symbolism as a denouement the dinner's guests probably took the opening lines of the president's traditional toast to heart: **'In the immortal words of a great Italian American, Yogi Berra, 'It ain't over 'till it's over.""**

The Obamas rewarded many of their most loyal staffers with seats at the dinner. **Among the 380 guests were the first lady's hair stylist, makeup artist, and personal trainer...**

FLOTUS wore a custom rose-gold chain-mail gown from Atelier Versace. It was a slinky gown with an asymmetrical neckline that slithered like liquid metal down her torso and around her hips. "It was pure Hollywood glamour," writes Fashion Critic Robin Givhan.

The Ecuadorian national flag flies outside their embassy in London today. (Alastair Grant/AP)

-- Ecuador acknowledged that it “temporarily restricted” the Internet access of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at its United Kingdom embassy after WikiLeaks posted John Podesta's emails. A foreign ministry statement said that while it stands by its decision in 2012 to grant Assange asylum, it doesn’t interfere in foreign elections. The ministry didn’t specify the extent of the restrictions on Assange’s cyber access, saying only that the limitations wouldn’t affect WikiLeaks’s ability to carry out its journalistic activities. Do not forget: Assange is hiding out in the

embassy to avoid facing trial for alleged sexual assault. (Nick Miroff)

-- Marco Rubio urged Trump and the RNC to stop attacking Clinton over hacked emails published by Wikileaks: "As our intelligence agencies have said, these leaks are an effort by a foreign government to interfere with our electoral process and I will not indulge it," Rubio told ABC News's Jon Karl in an interview. "Further, I want to warn my fellow Republicans who may want to capitalize politically on these leaks: Today it is the Democrats. Tomorrow it could be us."

-- Speaking of insecure email servers, Trump lives in a glass house. From Mother Jones' Joseph Cox: "A researcher has found that a number of email servers linked to [Trump's] hotel and others businesses are running horribly out of date software which receive no security patches, and are lacking other precautions for keeping hackers out." A number of mail servers for TrumpOrg.com, a domain registered to The Trump Organization, are using end-of-life software, including the operating system Windows Server 2003 and IIS 6.0. "Running outdated software and operating systems for your publicly facing email infrastructure is problematic, especially when you're a high profile organisation," said security architect Kevin Beaumont. "During an election where cybersecurity is such a big issue, I was a little amazed at what I saw."

Filipino villagers gather as they prepare for a super typhoon that may hit their village. (EPA)

GET SMART FAST:

1. **A dangerous super typhoon is spinning like a table saw towards the Philippines, barreling down with Category-5 level winds of 160 mph.** Local emergency managers are warning storm surge could exceed 15 feet when it makes landfall. The storm's arrival comes just days after *another* typhoon struck the country, killing at least two people. (Angela Fritz)

2. **A former Arkansas judge has been arrested and accused of giving lenient sentences to male defendants in exchange for sexual favors – soliciting at least nine men between the ages of 16 and 22 for what he referred to as "community service."** (Kristine Guerra)
3. **A magistrate judge delivered a victory to a transgender high school student in Illinois, allowing her to continue to use a bathroom and locker room corresponding with her gender identity.** (Derek Hawkins)
4. **More police officers have been killed in the line of duty so far this year than all of last year combined.** But federal statistics also show that being a law enforcement officer has continually gotten safer over the last four decades. Since the 1970s, the death toll for cops decreased by more than half. (Mark Berman)
5. **Warring parties in Yemen agreed to a 72-hour ceasefire.** The U.N. hopes the temporary truce will lead to a "permanent and lasting end" to the conflict. (AP)
6. **A new lawsuit accuses public schools in Flint, Mich., of failing to meet obligations to screen children for lead exposure.** The complaint alleges that the city's public school system has also failed to provide critical services and interventions to counter the effects of lead exposure. (Emma Brown)
7. **The University of Maryland agreed to hire more staff to address sexual assault on campus, after reports that a faculty shortage was slowing down open investigations. Student government leaders proposed a student fee to help fund the office. (Susan Svrluga)**

8. **Samsung is setting up pop-up phone exchange booths at airports across the country, allowing busy travelers to trade in Galaxy 7 smartphones that were recently banned from all U.S. flights.** But it's unclear what devices the kiosks will offer in replacement – and, as Hayley Tsukayama notes, a crowded airport is probably not the ideal place to make such a major purchase.
9. **The Transylvania castle that inspired the "Dracula" novels will be open to two brave souls on Halloween night, thanks to an Airbnb contest.** Winners will spend the night in the 14th century digs, eating by candlelight and sleeping in velvet-lined coffins. (Cleve R. Wootson Jr.)

Members of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces outside Mosul today. (Azad Lashkari/Reuters)

-- A dispatch from the front lines --> "Evidence of a 'difficult fight' ahead as forces move toward ISIS-held Mosul," by Kareem Fahim and Loveday Morris: "To defend a few miles of unremarkable road in northern Iraq, flanked by farmland, the occasional factory and flyspeck hamlets and villages, the Islamic State militants seemed to spare no effort. They loaded a Volkswagen with explosives and secreted remote-detonated bombs … They burned tires and dug large tunnels in houses … The arsenal ultimately failed to protect the militants. But it seemed to slow down the action, tying up a large

contingent of Iraqi soldiers as they tried to clear the road and villages of booby traps, a few wearying feet at a time. There were still 12 grueling miles left to travel before reaching the city's outskirts. The struggle for Mosul … is the largest and most complex so far in the battle against [ISIS] militants, who have been digging in for a fight. Residents who have recently fled the area … say the Islamic State has been erecting concrete barricades and filling trenches with oil that can be set on fire to slow advancing forces. 'It's going to be a tough fight and a difficult fight,' Obama said on Tuesday. 'But my expectation is that ultimately it will be successful.'"

Makia Nunes, moments after she became a U.S. citizen yesterday, kisses a cardboard cutout of Hillary. She registered to vote immediately after her Naturalization Ceremony in Los Angeles. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP/Getty Images)

THE RACE CONTINUES TO MOVE AWAY FROM TRUMP:

-- The chairman of a pro-Trump super PAC, Ed Rollins, told Laura Ingraham that it "would take a miracle at this point" for Trump to win.

-- Pre-spinning the loss, Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway says she cannot believe Clinton is not winning by a bigger margin given her numerous built-in advantages: "She has endless money. She's got a lot of the media. She has a very popular president and first lady campaigning for her," Conway told Anderson Cooper. "I will tell you, I am mystified as to why she can't get to those 52, 53 percent numbers in some of these states given the disadvantages we're handed every day."

-- Las Vegas bookies now have Clinton as a six-to-one favorite.

-- A Washington Post/Survey Monkey poll of 15 battleground states gives Clinton a "decisive advantage" over Trump in the competition for Electoral College votes. From Dan Balz and Scott Clement: "Based on the results … along with assumptions of the likely outcomes in other states that have consistently voted for one party or the other, [Clinton] holds leads of four percentage points or more among likely voters in states that add up to 304 electoral votes. Trump, [meanwhile], has the advantage in states with an estimated electoral vote total of 138. Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Texas, which account for 96 electoral votes, remain as toss-ups."

Down-ballot Republicans continue to outperform Trump in our survey: "Democrats need a net gain of five seats to take outright control -- four to exercise control if Clinton becomes president. The results showed Democrats with leads of four or more points in three states with GOP incumbents: New Hampshire, North Carolina and Wisconsin. Republican incumbents lead in Florida and Ohio, in the latter by a wide margin. Meanwhile, races in Nevada, for a seat currently held by Democrats, and Pennsylvania, for a seat now in Republican hands, continue to be close."

-- A Bloomberg Politics poll shows Clinton with a 9 point national lead (50-41). The two tied last month. Trump is losing support among both men and those without college degrees. "This poll shows movement toward Clinton with all the right groups it takes to win," said pollster J. Ann Selzer. "Their alignment with Clinton is a formidable change in the algebra."

-- An Arizona Republic/Arizona State University poll shows Clinton AHEAD in ARIZONA by 5 points. Waning support for the Republican nominee does not appear to have shifted down-ballot, however, with McCain leading by 11 points over Democratic challenger Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick. **Support for the presidential candidates also appears to be somewhat baked into the cake, with two-thirds of voters saying they were not influenced by the previous two debates.** Of respondents who indicated the debate was influential, 16 percent said they were more likely to back Clinton. 9 percent said the same of Trump.

-- The University of Houston finds Trump is only ahead by 3 points in Texas (41-38).

-- St. Norbert College shows Clinton leading by 8 points in Wisconsin (47-39).

-- Monmouth University puts Clinton up 7 points in Nevada (47-40). Her surge in the state is largely attributed to younger, non-white voters moving into her column over the past month.

-- A Fox News national poll shows Clinton up 6 points (45-39).

-- The Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun conducted a poll asking which candidate people thought would be more appropriate as the U.S. president. They found that only 3 percent of Japanese picked Trump, while 73 percent preferred Clinton. The rest had no opinion. The wording is non-traditional, but WaPo pollster Scott Clement checked out the paper's methodology and says it is legit. This will not surprise close poll watchers. Previous international surveys have found Trump to be exceptionally unpopular.

-- Fear of an imminent terrorist attack is one of the top concerns of people across the globe, with most expecting extremist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction, according to a new poll conducted in eight countries. From Carol Morello: "The survey, commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), showed that many people think their governments are not doing enough to combat violent extremism. And a majority in every country polled, including the United States, overwhelmingly approved all 21 options presented to them — among them, requiring identification cards for citizens and visitors; rigorous screening of immigrants; bans on incendiary religious speech; and monitoring of

phone calls, emails and social media."

Clinton takes a selfie with the crowd at a voter registration rally at Wayne State University in Detroit. (Reuters/Lucy Nicholson)

THE DAILY HILLARY:

-- Former FBI agent Brian McCauley pushed back on allegations of a “quid pro quo.” He confirmed that he spoke to a top State Department official about changing the classified status of one of Clinton's emails, as well as a long-standing FBI request for additional staffing in U.S. embassies, but he denied that any

inappropriate collusion ever took place. In an interview with Matt Zapotosky, McCauley acknowledged that he offered to do a favor in exchange for another favor, but before he had any inkling of what Kennedy wanted. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015. McCauley said that when he learned the missive concerned the attack on the U.S. diplomatic facility in Benghazi, Libya, he told Kennedy he could not help him. “I said, ‘Absolutely not, I can’t help you,’ and he took that, and it was fine,” said McCauley, who was the FBI’s deputy assistant director for international operations from 2012 to 2015.

-- “Black activists and organizers, frustrated with the Clinton campaign’s inability to engage young voters, have taken it upon themselves to challenge their peers to consider the consequences if Republicans take the White House," Vanessa Williams reports. "They also have encouraged young voters to focus on state and local elections, because those officials make decisions about how police departments and schools are run, issues that more directly affect their lives. Younger African Americans, like many millennials, are not excited about this year’s presidential election … [but] because Trump’s campaign has laid bare racist attitudes, the seeming indifference of black millennials to the election has sparked broad discussion within the African American community.”

-- Seventy Nobel Laureates endorsed Clinton, arguing that her election is “crucial for safeguarding freedom and preserving a constitutional government.” Signatories include world-renowned

experts in science, medicine and economics, such as chemist Peter Agre, economist Robert Shiller, and physicist Robert Woodrow Wilson. Separately, a group of 140 conservative writers urged voters to reject Trump, calling him “most dangerous to our nation’s founding ideals” in an open letter. Several former Republican White House staffers are on the list. (New York Times)

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John Podesta boards the Clinton campaign plane in White Plains, New York, yesterday en route to Las Vegas. (Lucy Nicholson/Reuters)

-- An early draft of Clinton's V.P. list: John Podesta in mid-March emailed Clinton a preliminary list of names to consider for her running mate, organized into what he termed "rough food groups." WikiLeaks posted it yesterday, and the Journal wrote it up:

The first group included her **Latino options**, including Secretary of Labor Tom Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julián Castro.

The second consisted of **black candidates**, including Cory Booker and Eric Holder.

The third was **white men who could help in a swing state**, including Tim Kaine, Terry McAuliffe and Sherrod Brown.

Another section included **seven women**, including Elizabeth Warren and Jeanne Shaheen.

He also suggested **three military names**, including retired Marine Corps Gen. John Allen.

Podesta also floated **corporate options**, including Bill Gates, Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Michael Bloomberg; Apple CEO Tim Cook and Coca-Cola Co. CEO Muhtar Kent.

The final category had just one name: **Bernie Sanders**.

Melania, Ivanka, Eric and Donald Trump, Jr. wait for the start of the second debate St. Louis. (John Locher/AP)

THE DAILY DONALD:

-- People Magazine published six stories from friends and colleagues of Trump accuser Natasha Stoynoff, corroborating her accusation that the Republican nominee forced himself on her in 2005. Two people who went on the record are now People editors - deputy East Coast editor Mary Green and East Coast editor Liz McNeil. Another is Stoynoff's former journalism professor, who says she called him looking for advice immediately afterwards. And

yet another friend went on the record to back her claims that she ran into Melania Trump on Fifth Avenue after the assault. The report comes as both Donald and Melania have denied the story and threatened legal action.

-- Video surfaced yesterday of Trump attacking Condi Rice in 2006: "I wish she was a bch," he said.** "I don't care if she's a lovely woman. I want somebody that can go and make deals. She goes to countries, nothing ever happens. Except sound bytes." When asked if she had any response to the New York Daily News report on Trump's remarks, the former secretary of state emailed CNN: "Can't wait until November 9!"

-- Trump's alleged misconduct has started a national conversation about sexual assault. From Katie Zezima: "The debate has been particularly painful for many victims of sexual assault, who now must endure nonstop coverage of allegations of groping and kissing without consent — along with backlash against the women who made the claims about Trump. But in the 2016 presidential election, the issue has become sharply divided along partisan lines, including claims by some Trump allies that the behavior described by Trump's accusers … might not be considered assault. The resistance against the accusers is particularly awkward for the Trump campaign, which simultaneously argues that women who accused Bill Clinton of wrongdoing years ago should be believed." GOP strategist Ashley O'Connor said that Trump is essentially saying, "You need to believe the people who have come forward and accused [Bill]. You need to believe that [Hillary] was attacking these women. But don't believe the women who have come

forward against me."

-- Melania is taking a page from the old Hillary playbook: "Until now, Melania Trump has declined to fulfill the mundane tasks of political wives, saying her duties to her young son are more important than the demand that a spouse go along for the ride to 'humanize' a candidate," Karen Tumulty writes. "Now, however, she has found herself in a time-honored duty for a political wife when a sex scandal hits — cleanup. [But] even as she defends her husband, [Melania] is willing to go only so far: In a moment where the script would appear to call for her to share a little more about 'the man I know,' she offered no personal glimpses of their lives. There was nothing more revealing than what one might hear in a campaign ad — outside, perhaps, her observation that she feels like she is living with two boys, not one."

-- Ivanka addressed her father's lewd 2005 remarks for the first time, telling Fast Company that his conversation with Billy Bush was "clearly inappropriate and offensive." "I'm glad that he acknowledged this fact with an immediate apology to my family and the American people," she added in a statement.

-- Donald Jr. has made a series of offensive statements during interviews with shock-jock radio hosts. CNN's Andrew Kaczynski unearthed a trove of controversial remarks from the candidate's son:

- **He joked about the Aurora movie theater shooting *on the same day* 12 people were killed:** After footage was played from a witness recounting the tragedy, Trump Jr. quipped that the survivor will still give the film "two thumbs up."

- **He joked about child abuse at beauty pageants:** "They yell at the kids like, yeah 'You didn't do good, you forgot to turn! You forgot your turn!'" a host said, depicting the role of a stage parent. "The kids, they're crying," Trump Jr. said. “I just wanna play with Barbie.” "'She beats me when you're not here,'" said the host. "She's like limping," added Trump Jr., mocking a child's voice. "'Help me, help me.'" **Trump Jr. added of the moms at beauty pageants, "They're all fat. Ugly."**
- **On not being able to mock overweight people:** "By the way you can't … even make fat jokes now … that's almost the worst one,” he said. “It’s easier to, like, do a racial thing, than it is a fat one because everyone knows they're fat and they get really offended."

Trump tells supporters to 'watch' St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago for voter fraud

-- Doubling down on his rigged election rhetoric, Trump yesterday provided his supporters with a list of three cities where they should watch for corruption on Election Day. "Take a look at St. Louis. Take a look at Philadelphia. Take a look at Chicago," Trump said in Colorado. "Look, look, if nothing else, people are going to be watching on November 8. Watch Philadelphia. Watch St. Louis. Watch Chicago, watch Chicago. Watch so many other places." (Two of those cities are in states that are not considered competitive, Jenna Johnson notes.)

-- Local election officials are panicking that Trump's reckless rhetoric will lead his supporters to bring guns to polling places, but they're mostly powerless to do anything about it: "The Prince William County (Virginia) electoral board ... considered seeking a one-day ban on weapons at polling places located on private property but was rebuked by a gun-friendly state legislator," Patricia Sullivan reports. "Del. Robert G. Marshall (R-Prince William) sent a letter to the board pointing out that it has no power to ban guns from polling places except for schools and courthouses, where weapons are prohibited by state law. ... Virginia's election officials have been discussing on their private email list the possibility of intimidation or violence Nov. 8 and talking about what to do about unruly observers. ... Seventy of Prince William's 91 polling places are in schools, with the remaining 21 in churches, fire halls and community centers. Firearms are allowed in county government buildings, such as fire stations, libraries and community centers."

-- Trump called for a Constitutional amendment to put in place congressional term limits, but he provided no details about the details. (Jenna Johnson)

Supporters of Nicolas Maduro display a giant inflatable dummy depicting late President Hugo Chavez in Caracas. (Juan Barreto/Getty)

-- **Venezuelan journalist and political scientist Francisco Toro argues that Trump really is much more like Nicolás Maduro than Hugo Chavez:** "Again and again, since taking over in 2013, Maduro has run roughshod over the constitution in ways Chávez never dared to … [and] for Venezuelans, the past year has been an object lesson in how dangerous this approach can be. Last week, we followed this crazy dynamic off the deep end, when the court overturned 800 years of constitutional practice, dating back to the original Magna Carta, ruling that when the constitution says the legislative branch has to

vote on the national budget, it means the president can just approve budgets on his own. … **Having your democracy commit suicide under the lure of a charismatic demagogue is not the kind of experience you can fully make sense of unless you've lived it in your own skin.** Before 2016, no explanation I could give my American friends was enough. Now, my American friends can just turn on CNN and watch it happening live."

THE BATTLEGROUNDS:

-- A civil rights group filed a federal lawsuit to force Virginia to extend its voter registration period, after the state's online system crashed on Monday. The technological glitch prohibited registration from an unknown number of participants. Some have estimated the number to be in the "tens of thousands." (Laura Vozzella)

-- Pro-Clinton super PAC Priorities USA announced it will begin airing ads in two Senate races and will start airing television and radio ads in Georgia to boost Clinton. "New ads will support Gov. Maggie Hassan in the New Hampshire Senate race against Republican Sen. Kelly Ayotte and Katie McGinty in the Pennsylvania Senate race against Sen. Patrick J. Toomey," Abby Phillip writes. "The super PAC also plans a new seven-figure television ad buy in Georgia in addition to new radio ads targeted at African American voters. The state has not been won by the Democratic presidential nominee since 1992."

-- DNC officials issued an apology after one of its campaign buses was recorded illegally dumping sewage into a Georgia

storm drain, calling the leak an "honest" but "unacceptable" mistake. The driver of the bus – adorned with larger-than-life faces of Clinton and Kaine – said the vehicle's sewage tank was full and leaking out. A guy in an auto parts repair store spotted him and record it. (Katie Mettler)

-- The race for Rep. Barbara Comstock's House seat in Northern Virginia has tightened. From Jenna Portnoy: The Cook Political Report is moving the race up to toss-up, while the Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report already considers it a toss-up district, tilting to the Republican. "Experts consider the district among the most competitive in the nation despite lackluster fundraising numbers from Democratic challenger LuAnn Bennett and evidence [Trump] might not be the anchor on down-ballot candidates some had expected," Portnoy writes. The two will face off this morning for the final debate of the campaign.

-- "Clinton Challenges Trump for a Traditional Republican Bloc: White Catholics," by the New York Times's Jason Horowitz in Philly: "Since the election of Ronald Reagan, white Roman Catholics have flocked to Republican nominees for a raft of reasons, including their stances on social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. But this year, something seems different. 'Trump is the exception to the rule,' said 67-year-old Carol Robinson, leaving an afternoon prayer meeting in Philadelphia. 'He's a loose cannon.' Roman Catholics are the country's second-largest religious group after evangelical Protestants, and they are as diverse as the country itself, with young liberals, cultural conservatives and, increasingly, Democratic-leaning Hispanics."

One quiet influencer could be Pope Francis, wh emphasizes inclusion and the welfare of the poor over divisive issues like abortion and homosexuality. In February, he suggested Trump “is not a Christian.”

-- Harry Reid reflects on when Trump used to be one of his donors in an interview with Paul Kane: “Reid found a priceless piece of memorabilia recently while sorting through 34 years of congressional papers. It’s a picture of Reid with [Trump], inside the real-estate developer’s Manhattan home, both men smiling. He’s pretty sure it’s from 1992, when [he] was running his first Senate reelection bid and when [Trump] was happy to help Democrats. Reid appreciated Trump’s generosity. ‘He wasn’t much of a big shot then, neither was I,’ Reid recalled … Over the years when Trump was a reliable donor to Senate Democrats, Reid saw no signs of a future Republican presidential candidate who he would later eviscerate as a 'racist' and a 'human leech.' Now, heading into political twilight, the former boxer is clearly relishing what is essentially his last campaign through attacks on Trump … ‘I’m kind of an unusual politician,’ he said."

Libertarian Lucy Brenton, Democrat Evan Bayh and Republican Todd Young debate in Indianapolis last night. (AP Photo/Michael Conroy, Pool)

SENATE DEBATES:

-- "Indiana's Senate race got personal Tuesday," the Indianapolis Star's Maureen Groppe and James Briggs write. "After weeks of attacking each other in campaign commercials, former Sen. Evan Bayh and GOP Rep. Todd Young directly accused each other of not representing Hoosiers' interests in their [sole debate] … Young repeatedly charged Bayh, a Democrat, with following the orders of Washington insiders and looking out for

himself. ‘Evan Bayh took the money and ran,’ Young said after criticizing Bayh's vote for the Affordable Care Act. ‘He joined a major lobbying firm in Washington, D.C., and he represented clients that needed relief from the very problem he created from Obamacare.’ Bayh said Young has voted against the needs of veterans, seniors and workers who are losing their jobs to overseas competition. And he accused Young of lying about his record. ‘Congressman Young has told so many whoppers here tonight, it's hard to keep track,’” Bayh said.

-- The final debate between Sen. Ron Johnson and Democrat Russ Feingold also turned personal, the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel's Bill Glauber reports: “Skirmishing over campaign finance, national security, the economy and the presidential candidates, the men engaged in a feisty 90-minute clash … With polls showing a tight race, there was little room for error as the candidates sought to shore up their base support while reaching out to the small number of undecided voters. In a sense, the debate was six years in the making as the two men entered the closing stretch of their rematch race. Throughout the debate, Feingold claimed that Johnson ‘didn't have a plan’ on issues. Johnson fired back, ‘Senator Feingold is always going to have a plan to grow government.’” "I will stand with the people of this state," Feingold said. "Senator Johnson stands with the corporations, the billionaires and the multi-millionaires." In rebuttal, Johnson said he “understands what it’s like to work”: "I'm the working man,” he said. “I've worked hard all my life."

A pan handler sits with a "Give me $1 or I'm voting for Trump" sign in Manhattan. (Carlo Allegri)

IT'S SILLY SEASON:

-- A Wisconsin woman was arrested after she spread peanut butter on 30 cars that she believed belonged to Trump supporters. But it turns out the cars actually belonged to members of a local conservation club! “Witnesses said 32-year-old Christina Ferguson stormed into the club meeting on Monday night, holding what a Portage County deputy’s report described as a ‘family-size jar of low-sodium, creamy natural Jif,'" HuffPost reports. "Officers

said Ferguson grew emotional as she explained how much she loved Clinton and hated Trump. She then explained why she'd misused peanut butter. 'Peanut butter is better than fire-bombing,' the officer quoted her as saying. She added that Trump wants to fire-bomb everybody in other countries."

-- A naked, hoofed statue of Hillary prompted a scuffle in Manhattan. An outraged Clinton supporter destroyed it while the artist tried in vain to save it, the New York Post. (Travis Andrews)

SOCIAL MEDIA SPEED READ:

Over 62 million people on Facebook in the U.S. posted about, shared, liked or commented on content related to Trump over 931 million times in the last month. The chart below shows the unique number of people on Facebook engaging in the conversation about each candidate – as well as the number of interactions those people generated. Interactions represents the total aggregate number of likes, posts, comments and shares made about a particular candidate within the timeframe. The interactions figure includes not only the activity on the candidate's page, but all of the likes, posts, comments and shares about that candidate from throughout Facebook:

The top five most talked about political topics on Facebook over the past month: 1. Crime & Criminal Justice; 2. Religion; 3. Taxes; 4. Government Ethics; 5. Racial Issues.

The Onion is on the lookout for late-breaking Trump news:

Coming soon to a Las Vegas billboard:

Fox's Sean Hannity and CNN's Brian Stelter went back-and-forth on the issue of voter fraud:

Mike Pence observed some of the damage from the firebombing in North Carolina and called it "an act of political terrorism":

Vogue endorsed Clinton, making the first ever political endorsement in the magazine's history. "We understand that Clinton has not always been a perfect candidate, yet her fierce intelligence and considerable experience are reflected in policies and positions that are clear, sound and hopeful," the magazine's editors write.

This is pretty funny:

Wyclef Jean posted this photo:

Debra Messing got a thank-you note from the White House:

Jason Chaffetz took this selfie while camping:

Kevin McCarthy went to a Dodgers game:

GOOD READS FROM ELSEWHERE:

-- New York Times, "David Letterman (and His Beard) Shop at Target These Days," by Dave Itzkoff: "Why does David Letterman have a beard? To put it more precisely: Why did Mr. Letterman, after stepping down from CBS's 'Late Show' and a 33-year career … spend the past year and a half cultivating a fleecy and prodigious mound of facial hair …? Did he grow these imposing bristles to keep the world at bay while he withdrew into retirement?" Was it his way of saying he was no longer the man who had spent 6,000 evenings reading Top 10 lists and interviewing 20,000 guests? **Actually, he**

explained, 'I just got tired of shaving every day, but then it became something else, and I'm not quite sure what it became.' In his dry Midwestern delivery, tinged with a new and unaccustomed element of wistfulness, he said: 'The beard is a good reminder to me that that was a different life. I'm hopeful that I will either find something else, or something else will be presented to me.' … With years of vitality left, he has been trying, since his 'Late Show' farewell in May 2015, to figure out what his next step should be."

-- National security reporter Walter Pincus prepared a list of pressing foreign policy questions that Trump and Clinton should answer in tonight's debate. Some highlights from his column for the Cipher Brief:

- **For Trump, on Russia:** "At the last debate, despite your being briefed by intelligence analysts and after Director of National Intelligence James Clapper publicly identified Russia as doing the hacking, you said [Clinton] 'doesn't know if it's the Russians doing the hacking,' and then added, 'Maybe there is no hacking.' Do you not trust the U.S. intelligence community determination … that the Russians are behind the hacking of the [DNC] emails?"
- **For Clinton, on Syria:** "You are advocating a no-fly zone and safe zones. Define just what would be involved on the part of the U.S. and its allies – including forces in the air and on the ground [for protection] … Would you seek congressional authorization to use American armed forces which will have to strike at Syrian government targets, something normally considered an act of war?"

For Trump, on Syria: On Oct. 9, you said "'Syria is no longer Syria. Syria is Russia and it's Iran.' You also said Assad forces and the Russians in Syria were fighting ISIS, and implied if you were president you would no longer support any anti-Assad forces. Instead you would join with the Russians, Iranians and Assad regime in fighting ISIS. Would that be your policy for Syria? And if the Assad regime, supported by Russian and Iranian military forces, attempted to regain control over all of Syria, would you stand aside and let that happen?"

HOT ON THE LEFT

HOT ON THE RIGHT

Two little known but influential Democratic operatives lost their jobs after edited footage from a video sting by conservative activist James O'Keefe found them entertaining "dark notions" about how to win elections. From Dave Weigel: "Footage from the video shows [Scott] Foval, a Wisconsin-based politico with a long resume, bragging about a litany of political dirty tricks. In the first video, he boasts of 'conflict engagement in the lines of Trump rallies,' takes credit for the violence that canceled a Trump rally at the University of Illinois in Chicago (and) **admits**

he's paid 'mentally ill' people to start trouble." Robert Creamer also announced he is stepping down from the work he was doing for a progressive consulting group following release of the tape. On Tuesday night's episode of "Hannity," two campaign representatives said that the tapes "validated everything" Trump had said about the possible threat of the election being stolen.

DAYBOOK:

On the campaign trail: Trump and Clinton debate in Las Vegas. Tim Kaine speaks in Upper Arlington and Springfield, Ohio and Asheville, N.C.; Bernie Sanders rallies Clinton supporters in Reno, Nev. Pence speaks in Durango, Colo.

At the White House: Obama has no public events scheduled. Biden speaks about the Cancer Moonshot at the SAP Global CEO Summit in New York. Later, he travels to Boston to speak again about the project at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute.

On Capitol Hill: The Senate and House are out.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

Obama mocked Trump for griping about a rigged election: "You start whining before the game's even over?"