

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

The West

Attorney General William Barr called out Trump after four federal prosecutors quit amid apparent White House interference in the sentencing of Roger Stone. Barr asked Trump to stop tweeting about Justice Department cases, and, in a rare show of unity against the president, Senate Republicans agreed. Beholden to no one, Trump was back on his phone hours later.

The East

China's coronavirus took another deadly turn this week, increasing the number of confirmed deaths by nearly 10% and official cases on the mainland by about 50%. Some officials worry that these are underestimates of the true scope of the disease, and that the virus could be deadlier and more contagious than Chinese officials are making it out to be.

Focus: Huawei

Huawei and two of its American subsidiaries were charged with conspiracy to steal trade secrets as well as racketeering conspiracy as part of an ongoing case in Brooklyn. While the additional charges mark an unexpected turn of events, it seems that the case is part of a larger effort by the Trump administration to convince allies to steer away from the company.

Volume XVIII

Other than headlines about the worsening effects of the coronavirus, news this week felt more political than anything else. As the US economy booms, Huawei was indicted for additional charges in a Brooklyn court, Attorney General William Barr sparred openly with Trump, and the states rejected a settlement offer from opioid companies. Also in the news this week was the New Hampshire primary: Bernie Sanders won, creating panic among the other candidates. Away from the headlines, we have a great spotlight piece written by Justin Furstoss: check it out below!

Italian Refugios



I went on a trip to Italy a few years ago to climb around the Italian alps. One cool thing I learned was that there are these tiny houses, called refugios, that serve food and drinks to hungry hikers and have cheap accommodations for those that need a place to sleep overnight. While I didn't sleep in one (although I certainly will on my next trip), it was amazing to have a beer, sandwich, and chocolate bar on the top of a mountain.

Letter From The Editor

Dear Reader:

This was a relatively muted week for news, one where the headlines seemed to be mostly political (with the exception of the coronavirus). With this in mind, we have an excited guest writer for one of our events this week: check out Justin Furstoss's experience at the Met!

We also found a new recipe that could help save your date this Valentines Day. Check out our peanut butter cup recipe: it's quick, easy, and very tasty, and will make you look like a professional chef.

Your editor,

Chris Sabaitis



Something Delicious

Peanut butter cups are another one of my favorite desserts, but packaged ones rarely have the full flavor of the peanut butter and chocolate that I'm craving. I've been making my own for a while, but recently came across [this recipe on Today](#). It's straightforward, easy, and doesn't require baking: I'll be trying it soon!

Ingredients

- Vegetable-oil cooking spray
- 16 ounces creamy peanut butter (1¾ cups)
- 1 stick plus 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 6 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate, chopped (1 cup)

Directions

1. Coat bottom and sides of an 8-inch-square baking pan with cooking spray. Line bottom and two sides with parchment, leaving a 2-inch overhang. In a large bowl, stir together 1 1/2 cups peanut butter, 1 stick butter and vanilla until smooth. Stir in confectioners' sugar, 1/2 cup at a time, until smooth. Transfer to prepared pan; press with your hands to flatten and smooth top.
2. Combine chocolate and 4 tablespoons butter in a metal bowl. Set over a saucepan containing 2 inches of simmering water; stir with a rubber spatula until chocolate has melted and mixture is smooth. Remove bowl from heat and let cool slightly, stirring gently, about 3 minutes. Pour chocolate over peanut-butter mixture in baking pan, tilting pan to ensure chocolate spreads evenly across top.
3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together remaining 2 tablespoons butter and 1/4 cup peanut butter until smooth. Let stand until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes. Drop 1/4-to-3/4-teaspoon rounds of mixture on top of chocolate in baking pan in 1-inch intervals. Drag the tip of a wooden skewer or toothpick quickly through center of each round to create a heart shape. Refrigerate until firm, at least 4 hours or, loosely covered, up to 1 week.
4. Run a paring knife along edges of pan on the two sides not lined with parchment. Use parchment overhangs to lift from pan; cut into 2-inch bars. Serve cold.

Finance and Markets

US consumer spending remained strong in January, supporting the economy and helping 2020 start off on a positive note. Most indicators remained strong; the main decline was in gasoline sales, which fell 0.5% over the past 6 months. Some economists expect that the boom is a result of low unemployment and substantial increases in hourly earnings, both of which would give households extra cash on hand.¹

On a separate note, in government bond land, yields have continued to fall and hit a record low this week. This is an indication that investors are still looking for some longer-term security the 2020 presidential election picks up. Some on wall street fear that the economy could weaken depending on the presidential field.

Headlines

Coronavirus Continues to Spread

The coronavirus that has health officials in a panic is continuing to spread, heightening fears that its rate of spread has yet to plateau, according to reports this week. China had added nearly 20,000 newly-confirmed cases between Wednesday morning and Thursday evening, an increase of almost 50% of the official account.² While the Chinese officials downplayed the increase as a mere change in how they quantify the disease, some health officials worry that the Chinese government is misrepresenting the true number of cases.

Huawei Charged with Additional Crimes

According to a new indictment filed in Brooklyn, "Huawei Technologies Co. and two of its U.S. subsidiaries were charged with racketeering conspiracy and conspiracy to steal trade secrets"³ as part of a larger case against the company. This is a continuation of the Trump Administration's efforts to convince allies to steer away from the company as countries around the world consider major upgrades to their telecom infrastructure to support 5G. Trump Administration officials say that Huawei passes information to the Chinese government and that it could undermine the security of the future of wireless technology.

Barr Spars with Trump

William Barr made headlines this week when the Justice Department overruled its own prosecutors to reduce the sentencing recommendation of Roger Stone, a former Trump ally. After the federal prosecutors made their original recommendation, Trump tweeted about how he thought the trial was proceeding unfairly. The Justice Department then intervened, prompting all four federal prosecutors immediately quit and raised questions as to whether Barr intervened on Trump's behalf.

Barr spoke out again after the debacle, telling reporters that Trump makes it "impossible for me to do my job" and asked him to stop tweeting about Justice Department cases.⁴

States Reject Offer to settle Opioid Litigation

21 states rejected a settlement offer from three major drug distributors this week, all but guaranteeing the trials will proceed in various states. According to Reuters, "A trial is scheduled to begin on March 20 wherein the state of New York and the counties of Suffolk and Nassau are suing drug distributors, drugmakers such as Johnson & Johnson and pharmacy chains including CVS Health Corp."⁵ The settlement had offered to pay the states \$18 billion over 18 years as healthcare professionals deal with the effects of the opioid crisis plaguing states across the country.

Spotlight

The Met's Moroccan Court

Where The Metropolitan Museum of Art

What *Our friend and collaborator Justin Furstoss visited this exhibit recently. Here's what he had to say:*

“Set apart from the rest, the Moroccan Court exhibit at the Met offers a unique place to rest and escape from the city, transporting you to decorative mosques from faraway lands. Built according to late medieval Moroccan designs, the exhibit was constructed by craftsmen from Fez as an intimate interior court. The space opens to a seqqaya (central fountain), underscoring the cultural and symbolic significance of water and vitality. Traditional zellij (individually cut tile), Persian rugs, and moucharaby carvings (wooden screens) accent the walls and floors. The gallery is a combination of acquired works and contemporary craftsmanship inspired by two fourteenth-century madrasas of Fez (the al-'Attarin and the Bu-'Inaniyya). For those seeking to slip away from daily responsibilities, pay a visit: you'll want to snag one of the yards-long Persian rugs for your tiny NYC apartment.” —*Justin Furstoss*



What's up this weekend?

[Project 19] Nightcap: Curated by Tania León

Where David Geffen Hall

When Various Times

What This is a project commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to celebrate women's contributions to music composition. I went on to an earlier performance and experienced a fantastic performance at Nina Young's world premiere event, and highly recommend the event to anyone who enjoys classical-style music and never-before-heard pieces.

Swan Lake

Where David H Koch Theater

When February 14 - 23, 2020

What “Perhaps the most famous of all classical ballets, Swan Lake combines a mythical tale of love and loss with the music of Tchaikovsky at his most rapturously beautiful. Peter Martins' staging draws on the

beloved original choreography of Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, as well as the one-act distillation of the ballet created by Balanchine. The striking décor and costumes, infusing the ballet's sweeping romantic atmosphere with glints of modernism, are by the contemporary Danish artist Per Kirkeby." —*the website*

[The Orchid Show: Jeff Leatham's Kaleidoscope](#)

Where New York Botanical Garden

When February 15 - April 19, 2020

What "The dazzling floral creations of Jeff Leatham, famed artistic director of the Four Seasons Hotel George V, Paris and floral designer to the stars, energize the 18th annual Orchid Show. Leatham's bold and colorful vision unfolds through captivating installations and designs, transforming each gallery of the exhibition in the historic Enid A. Haupt Conservatory into a different color experience and visual effect, like the turn of a kaleidoscope." —*the website*

[Rooftop Films](#)

Where Various locations

When Various times

What "Rooftop Films is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to engage and inspire diverse communities by showcasing the work of emerging filmmakers in outdoor locations, helping filmmakers to produce new films, and renting equipment and supporting film screenings citywide at low-cost to artists, nonprofits and community groups." —*the website*

Support our work

The Week in Review would not exist without readers and supporters like you. If you like our content, please consider getting us a coffee at <https://www.ko-fi.com/theweek>. It's quick, secure, and greatly appreciated.

Citations

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-retail-sales-increased-0-3-in-january-11581687089>

² <https://www.wsj.com/articles/1-716-chinese-health-workers-infected-by-coronavirus-six-health-workers-dead-11581668705>

³ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/chinas-huawei-charged-with-racketeering-11581618336>

⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-51498490>

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/usa-opioids-litigation-idUSL4N2AE3HM>