

Chalk Creek Quick Hits Archive 2020

December 30, 2020

- MIT, Cornell, Dartmouth, and some other colleges require a swim test to graduate.
- It is a federal crime to sell pinworm treatment without including information on the typical life cycle of pinworms.
- Chinese citizens have laundered over \$153b this year through online gambling sites and, of course, cryptocurrencies.
- The Chinese government estimates that there are 5,000,000 people involved in the money laundering business in China (not the ones whose money is laundered, but the actual infrastructure of people doing the laundering).
- Maine's Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claims increased by 646% in late November.
- The Valuations of E-sports companies remained flat in 2020 after jumping 60% in 2019. The lack of in-person spectators is to blame.
- South Africa has shut down all alcohol sales three times because of the virus.
- 25% of alcohol in South Africa is made and sold on the black market.
- Mariah Carey's "All I want for Christmas is You" is at the top of Billboard Global chart.

December 23, 2020

- Former Dallas Cowboy (ugh) and 49er Terrell Owens has launched his own wine label "Eighty-One."
- SolarWinds, the company that got duped by the Russians in the Treasury Department cyber-attack, was hacked with the password Solarwinds123 apparently (hurry, go change your password).
- The Wall Street Journal used the tagline "We've Got a Long Way to Go, and a Short Time to Get There" for an article about package delivery times this holiday season. Can they do what they say can't be done?
- The latest stimulus has moved the deductibility of business meals back to 100% from 50%. Politicians still refer to this as the "three-martini lunch" deduction.

December 16, 2020

- 14% of all credit card transactions in Germany fail.
- Bob Dylan's music catalog is now reportedly selling for \$350mm not \$200mm.
- Sellers of music catalogs only have to pay capital gains taxes unlike other artists whose royalty streams (collected or sold) are taxed as regular income.
- NFL players and coaches cannot play golf with each other.
- A vocal critic of the SPAC structure "accidentally" made \$250mm on the QS SPAC.
- The cost of moving the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to 2021 will likely be about \$12b.
- Blackrock's stock is the 8th largest holding in Blackrock's ESG fund.
- BP (don't you dare call it British Petroleum) is now the majority owner of the largest "carbon offset" company in the US. Translation: BP will pay people to not cut down trees so it can produce more oil.

- From our Delaware friends: Delaware public schools will have a “snow day” tomorrow. Delaware public schools are all virtual.
- The USPS’s new slogan is “Heroes Work Here” if they do say so themselves.
- Regulators in Massachusetts are going after Robinhood for its use of screen fireworks when a trade is completed (among other allegedly misleading marketing tactics).
- Wisconsin people eat raw, ground beef sandwiches.
- Chinese airline crews have been told to wear diapers and not use the bathrooms (just on the flights...not all the time).
- A reformed criminal hired by the Washington DC attorney general to help curb violence has been...arrested for murder.

December 9, 2020

- The California food company Eat Just “grows” chicken from cells which are produced in bioreactors. We will not be first in line.
- Stevie Nicks sold 80% of her song catalog for \$80mm. Bob Dylan is reportedly selling his whole catalog for \$200mm.
- We once rented a house at the Jersey Shore from the man behind the David Bowie bonds.
- Easy Jet, the European low-cost carrier, will start charging for overhead bin space.
- Ryanair, the Ireland based LCC (low-cost carrier), once proposed offering sexual favors for sale (we will leave the googling to you as this is a family outfit).
- 20% of urban homes in China are vacant.
- The Panama Canal’s expansion in 2016 was to allow for larger ships. But the unintended consequence is that increased usage often results in ships having to wait up to nine days to traverse the isthmus because of a bottleneck in canal bookings.
- The French’s initial digging of the Canal in the early 1880’s was financed by a public stock offering which was boosted by flattering press reports induced by substantial bribes. The French gave up 14 years later when the US took over.
- Cybersecurity firm FireEye was hacked by a foreign country.
- DoorDash thinks supply drives demand. DoorDash loses money.
- Breakdancing is going to be in the 2024 Olympics.
- There is a new credit card that offers rewards in Bitcoin. Reputedly, the \$200 annual fee must be paid in the same manner in which Randy Moss used to pay his fines: “With Straight Cash, Homey.”

December 2, 2020

- The FDNY’s Irish bagpipers can be heard for 10 miles.
- Amazon has hired an average of 1400 workers every day since March
- Palm oil is an ingredient in about half of all supermarket packaged products.
- Thanksgiving Day online sales jumped 21.5% vs last year.
- Black Friday (weekend) Sales dropped over 40% vs last year.
- Charles Barkley with the line of the week: “I love Covid golf. I cannot hit anybody lined up to the left or the right.”
- The NASDAQ is going to force companies under threat of delisting to have one woman and one self-defined “minority” on their board of directors.

- College cheerleaders are not governed by the NCAA so they can do endorsement and influencer deals (good for them).
- Kazakhstan's richest man took control of BTA bank in 2004 after a freak wolf-hunting accident.
- The Rockefeller Center Christmas tree's star weighs 900lbs.
- Biden's nominee to be chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, Cecilia Rouse, has made fame and fortune by appearing in these very Quick Hits! We previously disclosed her cutting-edge research that revealed students on performance-based financial aid actually tried harder in school.

November 25, 2020

- The Fox Sports regional sports networks are being renamed the Bally Sports networks.
- Sinclair bought these Fox RSNs for \$9.6b in 2019. They are now valued at \$4.2b.
- Before Muddy Waters research concluded that JoyY (YY) in China was fraudulent, it suspected it was either a prostitution ring or a money laundering service.
- Apple's security chief has been indicted for trading iPads for gun permits.
- Turkey raised interest rates 4.75% to 15% to match actual bank funding costs. President Erdogan will not allow any more hikes. Remember, he thinks high interest rates cause inflation (low interest rates do). And he believes in ESP.
- TJ Maxx is finally launching an e-commerce business after previously saying the virus changes to shopping habits were just temporary.
- Quick Hits Classic: TJ Maxx is called TK Maxx in the UK...apparently to avoid confusion.
- California has accidentally/fraudulently paid prison inmates \$140mm in virus-related unemployment benefits. \$400k has gone to serial killers and other death-row inmates.
- Norway, the virtue signaling capital of Europe, generates the most electronic waste per person per year at 53 pounds.
- A 51-year old California mother is serving as the surrogate mother for her daughter's baby.

November 19, 2020

- Progressive is offering Thanksgiving turkey insurance through Whole Foods.
- Lyft rides in 3Q were up 44% vs 2Q and down 44% vs 3Q2019.
- Chipotle has opened a digital-only restaurant.
- New York has a curfew for bars, restaurants, and...gyms?
- Deutsche Bank thinks one should have to pay federal tax for the "privilege" of working from home.
- In the "Generalissimo Franco is still dead" file, American Airlines says a top goal is be cash positive.
- Kazakhstan's new tourism slogan: "Very nice."
- Sunday Night Football ratings are down 16% vs last year.
- Sunday Night Football is the most watched primetime show for the 10th consecutive year.
- 300k people have moved out of New York City this year.

- Jogging turns into Running at 6mph (10-minute mile pace).
- Textbook publishers are proposing to install spyware into college libraries to track undocumented use of the publishers' s online material.
- Bitcoin aficionados are now claiming “escape velocity, network effect, social money, store of value, social construct” and all sorts of other buzzwords.
- Special Chalk Creek koozie goes to the person who can guess the image on the website for this week.
- China uses a different GPS system so mapping/coordinates do not sync.

November 11, 2020

- Costco is dropping a brand of coconut milk because of allegations of forced monkey labor.
- Turkey's president Erdogan fired his finance minister who happens to be his son-in-law.
- Beyond Meat announced it was a co-creator of McDonald's McPlant. MCD said it “crafted McPlant exclusively for McDonald's, by McDonald's.”
- The Pfizer vaccine must be stored and transported at -94 degrees. It goes bad in five days after thawing.

November 4, 2020

- Denying the Holocaust happened is not “misinformation” according to Twitter.
- Royal Caribbean reported negative revenues in the 3Q.
- In 1822, bonds for the Kingdom of Poyais traded on the London Stock Exchange.
- There has never been such a thing as the Kingdom of Poyais.
- The ANT IPO had orders totaling \$2.8t for \$20b of stock. This \$ amount would be the seventh largest annual GDP (for a country) in the world.
- The ANT IPO was delayed because of undisclosed regulatory concerns.
- Detroit had 1700 mortgages originated in 2019.
- Election day falls on a Tuesday to not interfere with church.
- ESPN pays \$1.9b per year for Monday Night Football.
- NBC pays \$960mm per year for Sunday Night Football.

October 28, 2020

- Reebok was founded in the UK in 1890.
- California has mandated against singing and playing wind instruments.
- Part of China's plan to cut emissions includes planting trees.
- The latest Barbie doll is the “Elton John barbie.”
- The University of Conn has settled a pay discrimination lawsuit. One of the violations: a women's team associate head coach made \$313,000 and a men's team assistant coach (both were second in command) made \$312,600. Both coaches were men. Title or Raise?
- The CEO of a psychedelic mushroom company said with a straight face, “no mushrooms were harmed’ in creating the company's product.

- Turkey criticized France's treatment of Muslims after a French teacher was beheaded by an Islamic extremist. Turkish President Erdogan said French President Macron needed "mental treatment."
- Turkish President Erdogan still believes that high interest rates cause inflation, and he still believes in ESP.
- ETF managers are creating knock-off ETFs of their own funds.
- Scientists are studying murder hornets by attaching mini-GPS devices to them.
- 10% of all Twitter users post 92% of all tweets.
- One of the reasons there are so many political robo-texts stems from a pissing match between the FCC and FTC.
- Chinese banks are offering retail investors in China 33x leverage to participate in the Ant IPO.
- The European Central Bank's interbank settlement system failed on Friday causing \$500b to "disappear" briefly.
- MLB lost \$3.1b this year as revenues dropped from \$10b to \$3b (expenses dropped \$4b).
- The Vegas Strip's "gaming win" dropped 39% in September vs last year. Lake Tahoe's "gaming win" jumped 35%.

October 21, 2020

- YouTube is the top destination for sports highlights.
- Black market currency exchanges in Argentina are called "caves."
- The Argentine Peso in the black market is worth half the official rate.
- A CNBC talking-head muttered the phrase "when a stock breaks out to an all-time high, it has unlimited potential."
- A GPS-tracked bar-tailed godwit (that is a bird nicknamed the "jet-fighter") flew from Alaska to New Zealand without stopping. That is 7500 miles, and it took 12 days.
- Madrid doctors protested something by stripping to their underwear in the town square.
- In the World Series, the Dodgers payroll is 3.8x higher than that of the Devil Rays.
- The governor of Illinois has spent \$56mm of his own money to promote a referendum that would increase taxes on the wealthy.

October 14, 2020

- The NHL makes 50% of its revenues from fan attendance.
- The NFL makes about 35% of its revenues from attendance.
- The Cowboys make 4x the league average in attendance revenues.
- NBA Finals viewership fell about 50% vs last year.
- Twitch (Amazon) controlled 91% of live video game streaming in 3Q.
- The hottest shoe brand in Italy is Travis Scott...he of the McDonald's branded lunch fame.
- The UN's World Food Program (WFP) has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.
- Nobel had no comment on the WFP contractors in Somalia stealing \$160mm worth of food and being the region's largest arms dealer.
- Peloton is worth more than the entire gym industry revenues in 2019.

- The maker of the popular game Fortnite will be the brain inside GM's new electric Hummer.
- Disney Land and Disney World are both in Orange County
- Another Softbank investment is seeking funds after disclosing it is "facing client defaults, regulatory scrutiny, and loosening ties from partner firms" according to the WSJ.
- The company Square bought \$50mm of Bitcoin.
- Twitter will not publish NY Post articles but it will publish Wikileaks.

October 7, 2020

- A Seagram's heiress is going to jail for bankrolling a sex cult.
- Public sector employees in Connecticut make 28% more than their private sector counterparts.
- It is a federal crime to use non-hoofed mammals to carry equipment in a national park.
- Carson Wentz of the football Eagles got booed at home despite no fans in the stadium (hat-tip to the AV guy in Philly).
- A great twitter line: "Test the vaccine on politicians first. If it works, we are safe. If it doesn't work, we are safer."

September 30, 2020

- A reseller of vintage, collectible sneakers has been valued at \$1.75b.
- This year has seen 25 stocks (\$100mm minimum market value) rally over 400%. This is the most since the dot.com mania of 2000.
- The UK govt will not create a budget this year because of the virus.
- Twitch saw its August "viewership" increase 57% vs last August to reach 1.47 billion hours.
- Berkeley, California has banned candy from check-out lines.
- NYC has made outdoor dining in public space permanently legal.
- NYC winters are still expected to be really cold.
- The three most popular sports for Gen Z to view (ages 13-23) are NBA, UFC, and esports.
- A dead man was elected mayor in a small town in Romania.
- Oldie but goodie: London BBQ joints can run out of half racks of ribs while still having full racks.

September 23, 2020

- Another cryptocurrency scam has emerged in which fake domains mimicking crypto exchanges were set up. Customers unwittingly handed over their credentials. The scammers were not happy enough with the stolen bounty. But rather, they used the money to buy low-priced cryptocurrencies in an old school pump-and-dump scheme. This what got them caught.
- Merrill is suggesting the return of the Dividend Discount Model will supplement the Price/Earnings ratio as the best metric to watch.
- There will be futures on the California Water Index this fall.

- McDonald's (MCD) has run out of Travis Scott burgers.
- Who the heck is Travis Scott?
- A judge has stopped bankrupt Hertz from paying more bonuses to executives and criticized a round of bonuses paid right before declaring bankruptcy. [Hertz Declaring Bankruptcy](#)
- A recent "tweet of the day" in the WSJ was from a former economist at the Dept of Labor. She bemoaned the lack of infrastructure to properly count the number of unemployed. No comment from her on how to actually help the unemployed.
- The net worth of US households hit a record \$119t in June.
- Apple believes Work-From-Home is here to stay and is a net positive.
- Apple expects all of its Silicon Valley employees to be back in the office in 2021.
- The Pac 12 conference paid bonuses to 50 employees prior to canceling sports and firing 94 of the 196 employees.

September 16, 2020

- Jacksonville Jaguar tickets are selling for \$28.
- Texas A&M tickets are selling for \$400.
- Ad prices for NFL Sunday Night Football are up over 30% vs last year.
- Thursday and Sunday night's NFL viewing audiences were down about 15% vs last year.
- 6mm Americans will bet on the NFL with a bookie this year.
- Many Robinhooders are unaware they must pay taxes on capital gains made via stock trading (according to the WSJ).
- Vinyl record sales have surpassed CD sales this year.
- Turkey has imported \$15b worth of gold so far this year. This is up 153% vs last year. The Turkish Lira is down over 20% vs the USD this year.
- The Chinese communists have pushed local banks to extend loans to hog farmers to combat a shortage of pork. These hog loans are to be backed by the shrinking hog herds.
- Asian airlines are conducting "flights to nowhere" which depart and arrive at the same airport.
- A "gender reveal" party with fireworks is responsible for one of the wildfires ravaging California.
- An Austrian man set the world record for being submerged in ice up to his neck: 2.5 hours. No word if he jumped in a Finnish sauna afterwards.
- A fraud prevention startup called NS8 had to fire hundreds of employees for...fraud.
- Research shows that red-light cameras reduce cross-road collisions but increase rear-end collisions.
- The billionaire who created Duty Free shops has fulfilled his pledge of giving away all his wealth. His foundation has given away \$8b. Chuck Feeney and his wife left themselves \$2mm for retirement.

September 9, 2020

- Suzano, a Brazilian paper company, is issuing bonds with interest rates that vary with the company's emissions.
- The only trucking freight "lane" that has remained cheap is DFW to LA.

- The Kentucky Derby wanted to charge Las Vegas casinos 10.5% of all bets placed in the pari-mutuel pool. Vegas declined and ran their own books for the race.
- The Kentucky Derby tv viewership dropped 49% vs last year.
- Billy Beane, the much-heralded baseball GM despite never going to the World Series much less winning one, has launched a \$575mm SPAC that will look to “effect a merger in sports, media, and data analytics.”
- In San Francisco, gyms for public employees remain open while all private gyms are closed.
- FATMAAN is a great new market acronym (Facebook, Apple, Tesla, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Netflix).
- August saw the most insider selling since 2015. 1042 insiders (CEO, CFO, Directors) made sales of \$6.7b.
- The Swiss Central Bank owns over \$120b in US stocks.

September 2, 2020

- Researchers in Finland claim to have discovered a cure for the hangover. The maker of the cure funded the research.
- The hangover researchers admitted flaws due to some participants drinking more than they should have and some participants did not show any signs of being intoxicated.
- In maybe unrelated news, Finland is home of the World Sauna Championships.
- Commercial baby chicks in the US are delivered in the mail.
- Most money-market mutual funds have eliminated fees to prevent yields from going negative.
- There are 643 oil rig platforms in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Golf equipment sales were up 51% in June vs the same month last year.
- Hydrologically, there are only four Great Lakes (Michigan and Huron are the same body of water).
- CBS is trying to sell Super Bowl ads for \$5.5mm for a 30 second spot.
- Research is pouring in now declaring that economy-wide lockdowns are bad and targeted restrictions are effective. In other news, Generalissimo Franco is still dead, indeed.
- A Luka Doncic rookie card has gone from \$1,800 to \$80k in 18 months.
- New York waived its 14-day quarantine mandate for participants in the Video Music Awards.
- In New York, you are still not allowed to eat or drink standing up.
- Palantir is coming to market. Its unlisted F shares will have variable voting rights (we love this company but hate this share structure).
- Argentina is restructuring its 100-year bonds which were issued three years ago.
- Robinhood is being investigated by the SEC for not disclosing its practice of selling its order flow to high frequency traders.

August 19, 2020

- Gold miners can extract 1.5 grams of gold per ton of rock extracted today. 10 grams of gold used to be the norm back in the 1970s.
- US airfares were down 24% in July vs last year.
- Citigroup accidentally paid Revlon's lenders \$900mm. Citi wants the money back.
- The average rate on a refinanced, 30-yr mortgage is 3.37%. The rate on a new 30-yr mortgage is 3.14%.
- The TSA confiscated 15k guns in July vs 5k last July.
- Barry Switzer did not fly during July.

August 12, 2020

- Bankrupt Hertz sold \$29mm of stock in June before the SEC suspended further stock sales.
- California received \$38.4b in federal money to supplement Unemployment Insurance.
- South Dakota received \$177mm.
- California received 217x the money while having only 45x the population.
- A Vanderbilt professor published research on the impact of financial aid on students working part-time jobs. Not so astonishingly, grants have the same effect as loans in reducing hours worked.
- There were 10 brands of hard seltzer in 2018. There are over 65 now.
- France has a backlog in virus testing because the labs are all on summer vacation.
- It is a federal crime to sell diced pineapples in a can unless they are reasonably uniform cube-shaped pieces (lifted this from @crimeaday on twitter).
- The Nasdaq 100 has closed up over 60% of the days in 2020. This is the highest in 34 years.
- CMBS (Commercial Mortgage Backed Securities) 30-day delinquency rates are approaching 10% vs the usual 2% rate.
- Charles Ponzi was arrested 100 years ago today.

July 27, 2020

- Japan has a criminal conviction rate of 99.4%.

July 22, 2020

- Colleges received \$14b in Cares Act money. They claim the costs to reopen will be \$74b.
- Johnnie Walker is going to come in paper bottles in 2021 (like milk cartons).
- Jeff Bezos made \$13b on Monday (these stats are always stilly, but this one stood out).
- The 100yr old Brit that walked in his backyard raising \$40mm for the NHS was finally knighted by Queen Elizabeth.
- John Cleese and David Bowie both turned down knighthood.

- The NHS, the socialist medical system in the United Kingdom, spends about \$190b a year. Remember, childbirth with a doctor is not covered by the NHS. But if the mom dies, it is free.

July 15, 2020

- Apparently, some of the Italian mafia's "receivables" were sold to a bank that repackaged them along with other healthcare receivables into a fixed income structured product.
- Amazon warehouses have a "Time off Task" policy which limits the number of unproductive minutes in a day. Handwashing no longer counts as an unproductive minute.
- Connecticut has had the worst state GDP since 2007 at -0.4% per year.
- Idaho's annual GDP growth since 2007 is +4.1%.
- Lumber prices increased 60% in 2Q.
- China claims they found the Wuhan virus in imported shrimp.
- The Chinese shrimp farming industry has shrunk dramatically recently because of...disease.
- CNBC reported that cyber crimes involving the virus have increased 330% since March. How many were there before the virus was around?
- TLISA stock surged 40% at one point this past week thanks to Robinhood traders and their inherent dyslexia (or laziness or stupidity). TLISA=Tiziana Life Sciences...not Tesla (TSLA).

July 8, 2020

- Uber says its Eats division will be profitable on an adjusted EBITDA basis in two of its five largest markets. We might have missed a qualifier or two.
- Uber is buying Postmates for \$2.6b. Life-to-date, Postmates has raised and incinerated \$900mm.
- The Ayn Rand Institute asked for and received a PPP loan between \$350k and \$1mm.
- Gold ETF's have had record inflows of \$5.6b in 2020. This amount of physical gold can fit into about 14 gallons.
- Some of the better performing dividend mutual funds have Microsoft and Apple as their top holdings (yields of 0.98% and 0.88% respectively). Caveat Emptor.
- The Chinese government holds frozen pork reserves.
- The bubonic plague still exists. It can be treated with a simple antibiotic.

July 1, 2020

- 1.1mm dead people have received \$1.4b in stimulus money.
- Chuck E. Cheese parent CEC (not public) filed for bankruptcy. The Wysong kids do not know yet.
- Chesapeake Energy (once CHK, to be CHKAQ) had no budgets, owned \$110mm in parking lots, had a hidden wine cave behind a broom closet, was the

largest season ticket holder in the NBA, and was the largest user of Net Jets in the US. It finally declared bankruptcy.

- That ridiculous, giant-ipad seller, Mirror, masquerading as an “in-home” fitness company sold itself to Lululemon (LULU) for \$500mm. Mirror is thought to be selling 700 “mirrors” a month. That is about \$13mm in annual revenues (our best, random guess). God help us.

June 24, 2020

- Executives at eBay (EBAY) have been arrested for sending a preserved fetal pig to a critical eBay blogger (it was part of a crazy campaign to harass her).
- Sad story: A Robinhood trader killed himself because of a huge negative balance in his account. There is speculation that he misread his account because of option positions.
- 481 Tyson (TSN) employees out of 3,748 tested positive for the virus.
- 455 of the 481 Tyson employees are asymptomatic.
- Bentley University “teachers” claim that protests are not a virus risk because protesters are social distancing themselves away from people in their homes.
- New Jersey is being sued for allegedly telling a minority-owned investment firm that the state does not hire minority-owned investment firms even though the firm was hired by New Jersey.

June 18, 2020

- Rice futures have rallied almost 50% in the last two weeks.
- A female US Olympic boxer tested positive for a banned substance which came from “sexual transmission from her boyfriend.”
- There is female Olympic boxing.
- New York City’s new “contract tracing” department has been ordered not to ask if people have attended a protest.
- According to Fidelity, 33% of all investors over age 65 sold all of their equity holdings in February to May.
- The owner of Luckin Coffee (LK), the Chinese coffee chain with fraudulent accounting, had a margin loan of \$500mm from Wall Street banks. Goldman Sachs sold the reclaimed stock for \$200mm.
- The highest paid CEO in the S&P 500 last year was a minority woman.
- In Japan, a Densuke watermelon recently sold for \$2,000.
- New York City has 125k hotel rooms. Las Vegas has 150k hotel rooms.
- There is a shortage of US coins as they are being hoarded per the Fed.
- The two federal mints make seven billion pennies a year.

June 10, 2020

- The Department of Labor expects \$26b in unemployment benefits fraud.
- The last person to receive Civil War pension benefits just died. She was the daughter of a veteran that gave birth to her when he was 83 in 1930!

- DuckDuckGo is the fourth most popular web search engine in the US.
- New York City accounts for 5% of US GDP.
- Los Angeles arrested thousands of protesters/looters.
- Los Angeles announced it will bring any charges against any of them.
- If there was any doubt about people flocking back to Vegas, here is a not-so-clear picture of a slot player this week. That is a cigarette under his mask.

June 3, 2020

- Cyprus will reimburse tourists for lodging, meals, and medicine if they contract Wuhan.
- New York State issued an executive order allowing businesses to deny service to anyone not wearing a mask.
- Texas issued an executive order allowing for fans at outdoor sporting events.
- Hertz was the #1 long stock on Robinhood last week.
- Hertz filed bankruptcy this week.
- Pablo Escobar's brother is suing Apple for \$2.6b because his iPhone location gets hacked.
- A looter attempted to rob a Philadelphia gun store. He was shot by the owner.
- Here is a random chart. Renewable energy consumption has surpassed that of coal. This is not terribly unexpected given coal's sharp decline. What really struck us in this chart was the start date. We guess watermills were a source of renewable energy back in 1860:

May 27, 2020

- Burger King in Italy is selling a "Social Distancing Whopper" with 3x the onions.
- Carbon Dioxide supply is in shortage again – this time due to decreased driving. CO2 is a byproduct of ethanol production. Ethanol plants are shutting down because there is not enough demand for gasoline which is the biggest buyer of ethanol (government mandate).
- A Yale study indicates that sewage shows corona virus RNA before it appears in the population.
- The term stock market "punter" comes from its use in UK card games during which it means to bet.

May 22, 2020

- 70% of Harley dealers will not receive any additional inventory this year to drive "exclusivity" in the brand.
- Norway climbs back on its high horse and "blacklists" four Canadian oil companies from its (Norway's) sovereign wealth fund... which was created from oil revenues.
- A pizzeria owner started ordering his own pizzas through DoorDash for an \$8 profit.
- Netflix has content warnings about "smoking" but not "violence."

- This week's Amazon rumor is that it is looking at bankrupt JC Penny (AMC theaters last week).
- Only 5% of people that applied for mortgage forbearance said they actually needed financial help.
- Treasury sold 20 year bonds for the first time since 1986. Demand was strong because the Fed owns most of the outstanding bonds with 20 years left (30 year bonds issued 10 years ago).

May 13, 2020

- Disneyland Shanghai sold out its first-day reopening in 3 minutes (30% capacity).
- Disney World in Florida is accepting reservations for this July.
- Two McDonald's employees were shot by a customer after he was told he could not "dine in."
- New York State is going to tax the 21,000 out of state healthcare workers that volunteered
- The FTC has received over 40k complaints of Wuhan-related fraud.
- Prince Harry might have stolen the tone-deaf award from David Geffen. Harry is sad he does not "have structure in his life" in California.

May 6, 2020

- Our apologies to McDonald's for implying widescale layoffs...its headcount is unchanged (but our point that low wage employees are now disincentivized to go back to work remains valid).
- April saw a 513% growth in liquor deliveries (according to Drizly).
- Breast cancer screenings were down 94% in March vs the three-year average.
- The old record for US borrowing during a quarter was \$530mm back in 3Q2008.
- The new record for US Borrowing will be 2Q2020 at over \$3T.
- Unshockingly, California became the first state to borrow from the Federal government to pay unemployment benefits (\$340mm). Illinois and Conn are next in the queue.
- During the last 19 years, 36% of Amazon's (AMZN) earnings reports have led to a next-day drop of over 5%.
- Amazon is up over 25,000% during the last 19 years.

April 29, 2020

- 1500 new hand sanitizer makers have been registered with the FDA.
- Instances of children ingesting hand sanitizer were up 79% in March.
- Sales of cases of discount chickens are only allowed on certain dates across different states.

- New York City's original Potter's Field, the burial ground on Hart's Island for unclaimed dead, saw a 96% rise in interments there during the first three months of 2020.
- New York City is composed of 42 islands. Here are some of the more colorful names: Hog Island, Prince of Wales Island, Shooter's Island, Chimney Sweeps islands, Rat Island, and Mau Mau Island.

April 22, 2020

- Amazon has had hired more workers in the last 10 years than any other company.
- No word on knighthood yet for the 99yr old Englishman who raised over \$30mm for charity by walking in his backyard.
- The above charity was for the NHS, the UK socialized health services. What a waste of an incredible effort.
- For newcomers, our disdain for the NHS runs deep after being told "do not worry, if your wife dies, the operation is free."
- Prince Harry and Megan Markle donated \$150k of their wedding profits to charity.
- A year ago, Netflix (NFLX) was \$170b smaller than Exxon (XOM). It is now \$20b bigger.
- The CDC Poison Control hot line saw a 20% increase in calls concerning home cleaning products in March vs January.

April 15, 2020

- Wimbledon had a \$2mm pandemic insurance policy. It paid off \$140mm.
- 90 of the world's 195 countries have already asked the IMF for a bailout this year
- The US funds almost 20% of the IMF.
- One of the hedge funds that blocked client withdrawals is now asking the same clients for a loan.
- China has banned domestic wild-animal trading.
- China is offering tax-breaks for wild-animal exports.
- The government "lockdown" is costing the US \$25b a day.

April 8, 2020

- FBI background checks for firearms increased 90% in March vs last year.
- Ammo.com reported a sales increase of 792% during March vs last year.
- San Francisco has reversed its ban on grocery store plastic bags; they are hygienic.
- San Francisco has banned reusable tote bags for groceries; they are virus incubators.
- The percentage of noncash payments for food delivery is up 10x.
- The World Health Organization clarified that currency cannot transmit Wuhan.