

"All the News  
That's Fit to Print"

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Southern California: Morning low clouds at the coast. Sunny south, partly cloudy north. Locally breezy. Highs from the 60s beaches, 90s inland. Weather map on Page B14.

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DREW ANGERER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

President Obama, who also honored law enforcement officers Wednesday, said the I.R.S. had to be above the political fray.

## Big Banks Get Break in Rules To Limit Risks

By BEN PROTESS

Under pressure from Wall Street lobbyists, federal regulators have agreed to soften a rule that is intended to rein in the banking industry's domination of a risky market.

The changes to the rule, which will be announced on Thursday, could effectively empower a few big banks to continue controlling the derivatives market, a main culprit in the financial crisis.

The \$700 trillion market for derivatives — contracts that derive their value from an underlying asset like a bond or an interest rate — allow companies to either speculate in the markets or pro-

## Baffling Rise in Suicides Plagues U.S. Military

By JAMES DAO  
and ANDREW W. LEHREN

After Specialist Freddy Hook, a medic with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division, killed himself in 2010, the trail of possible causes seemed long.

He had used illegal drugs: Was it the demons of addiction? His rocky relationship with his fiancée? A wrenching deployment to earthquake-ravaged Haiti or the prospect of an impending tour in Afghanistan?

As with most of suicides plaguing the military today, no one will know for sure.

"There are so many factors," said his mother, Theresa Taylor, of Lafayette, La. "Everything that was important to him was having problems."

Of the crises facing American troops today, suicide is one of

only the number of American troops killed in Afghanistan but also the number who died in transportation accidents last year.

Even with the withdrawal from Iraq and the pullback in Afghanistan, the rate of suicide within the military has continued to rise significantly faster than within the general population, where it is also rising. In 2002, the military's suicide rate was 10.3 per 100,000 troops, well below the comparable civilian rate. But today the

rates are nearly the same, above 18 per 100,000 people.

And according to some experts, the military may be undercounting the problem because of the way it calculates its suicide rate.

Yet though the Pentagon has commissioned numerous reports and invested tens of millions of dollars in research and prevention programs, experts concede they are little closer to understanding the root causes of why

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## After Outcry, Chief of I.R.S. Is Forced Out

### U.S. Inquiry to Look at Any False Statements

By JONATHAN WEISMAN

WASHINGTON — President Obama announced Wednesday night that the acting commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service had been ousted after disclosures that the agency gave special scrutiny to conservative groups. Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr., meanwhile, warned top I.R.S. officials that a Justice Department inquiry would examine any false statements to see if they constituted a crime.

Speaking in the White House's formal East Room, Mr. Obama said Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew had asked for and accepted the resignation of the acting commissioner, Steven Miller, who as deputy commissioner was aware of the agency's efforts to demand more information from conservative groups seeking tax-exempt status in early 2012.

"Americans have a right to be angry about it, and I'm angry about it," Mr. Obama said. "It should not matter what political stripe you're from. The fact of the matter is the I.R.S. has to operate with absolute integrity."

Mr. Miller, who told agency employees that he would leave the administration in early June, is scheduled to testify Friday before the House Ways and Means Committee in the first of a series of hearings on the I.R.S. activities.

The president acted as his administration broadly stepped up pressure on the I.R.S. — and sought to insulate itself from the outcry over the agency's conduct. Mr. Obama spoke to reporters after an Oval Office meeting with Mr. Lew and his deputy, Neil Wolin, who will be responsible for carrying out the president's orders to install safeguards to prevent a similar effort.

In an internal message to em-

## AN ONSET OF WOES RAISES QUESTIONS ON OBAMA VISION

### BRUISED BY OPPONENTS

### White House Struggling to Fashion Agenda for Second Term

By PETER BAKER

WASHINGTON — Thwarted on Capitol Hill, stymied in the Middle East and now beset by scandal, President Obama has reached a point just six months after a heady re-election where the second term he had hoped for has collided with the second term he actually has.

Mr. Obama emerged from a heated campaign last November with renewed confidence that he could shape the next four years with a vision of activist government as a force for good in American society. But the controversies of recent days have reinforced fears of an overreaching government while calling into question Mr. Obama's ability to master his own presidency.

The challenges underscore a paradox about the 44th president. He presides over a government that to critics appears ever more intrusive, dictating health care choices, playing politics with the Internal Revenue Service and snooping into journalists' phone records. Yet at times, Mr. Obama comes across as something of a bystander occupying the most powerful office in the world, buffeted by partisanship and forces beyond his control.

On Wednesday, announcing the departure of the acting director of the I.R.S., he portrayed himself as an onlooker to the scandal, albeit one with the power to force changes. "Americans have a right to be angry about it, and I'm angry about it," he said.

He likewise had nothing to do with the Justice Department seizure of phone records of report-

# Currents

NEWS, PRODUCTS AND PERSONALITIES



## Open Where Basic Ingredients Rule

▶ The town of Hudson, N.Y., is where people go to renovate Victorian houses, sell chunky raw-edged wood furniture and install restaurants in former blacksmith shops. Zakary Pelaccio, the chef behind the Fatty Crew group of restaurants, went down the third path with Fish & Game.

With his wife, Jori Jayne Emde, and the film and television pro-

ducer Patrick Milling Smith, he opened the place this week in a 19th-century brick building with two hearths where roasting happens. "You can never have too many fireplaces, in my view," said its architect, Michael Davis, who specializes in revising or reproducing the look of vintage properties. (The fireplaces were created from brick and stone salvaged

from the formerly troubled foundation.) Mr. Davis described the restaurant as an architectural complement to Mr. Pelaccio's culinary style: "We've taken the same approach to an honest use of basic ingredients to create something very rich."

Fish & Game, 13 South Third Street, Hudson, N.Y.; (518) 822-1500. **JULIE LASKY**



## Furniture Bedding Fit for A Dreamer

▶ The Milanese designer Paola Navone is famous (at least in Europe) for mixing North African and Asian artisanal handicrafts into modern goods. But now her reputation is about

to make an Atlantic crossing. She recently introduced an outdoor furniture collection for Janus et Cie, and she's working on interi-

ors for the Como Hotel in the South Beach district of Miami, which will be presented in the fall. This week, Anthropologie, the quirkily stylish lifestyle chain, will release what Ms. Navone has described as her "dream bedroom collection." This 20-piece line includes bed linens, furniture, suitcases, lighting and accessories. Prices range from \$10 for a mercury-glass mushroom to \$4,200 for a four-poster bed. Information: (212) 343-7070 or anthropologie.com.

**ARLENE HIRST**

## Deals Wireless Accessories And More

▶ From Friday through Sunday, **Modernica** will take 15 percent off all furniture, lighting, ceramics and garden accessories on its Web site, including items already on sale (a Case Study fiberglass rocker, originally \$439, will be about \$373; a George Nelson medium saucer Bubble lamp, originally \$329, will be about \$280). Use "FactorySale" as the



code at checkout; modernica.net, (323) 933-0383.

Many items are up to 70 percent off at **Broadway Panhandler** through Sunday (a seven-inch Swiss Diamond nonstick fry pan, which is regularly \$75, is about \$30; an 11-inch Berndes nonstick wok, regularly \$120, is about \$60); 65 East Eighth Street (Broadway), (212) 966-3434, broadwaypanhandler.com.

**A+R** is discounting all Pop! Retro Bluetooth handsets and Pantone iPhone cases by 20 percent, through Sunday (the handsets, shown, and the iPhone cases, both usually \$35, are \$28); (800) 913-0071, aplusstore.com. **RIMA SUQI**

**Good deals** may be reported to deals@nytimes.com.



## Lighting A Construction Set For Enterprising Adults

▶ Paola Petrobelli grew up in Padua, Italy, only 30 miles from Venice and its celebrated glassmakers.

So when this designer abdicated a career in molecular biology for something more artisanal, she said, she was naturally drawn to glass. Today, Ms. Petrobelli turns the supple material into deceptively simple objects, including transparent plates whose colors merge in the stacking.

Last week, Gallery Libby Sell-

ers in London opened a show of her new lamps, little towers of interchangeable pieces. The collection is called 24, after the number of possible shape combinations.

"The final result is quite diverse," Ms. Petrobelli said. She should know; she is also a professional motocross racer on top of her other vocations. On view through June 14. Prices start at about \$9,940. Information: (44) 20-3384-8785 or libbyseller.com. **JULIE LASKY**



CHRISTIE'S

## Events Even Duchesses Have Tag Sales

▶ Most people don't associate bathrooms with patinated floor lamps that have carved bronze birds for feet. Then again, most people don't live in a palace. In the early 1920s, Armand Albert Rateau, an Art Deco master, created furniture for the Liria Palace in Madrid for the apartments of the Duchess of Alba, María del Rosario de Silva y Gurtubay, who married the 17th Duke of Alba in 1920. The palace was damaged in the Spanish Civil War, and some

of Rateau's pieces are lost to time. Now, the House of Alba is selling the rest of her collection at Christie's France. Among the 100 pieces included in the May 23 sale are the lamps (estimated at about \$1.95 million to \$2.6 million each); a carved and gilded wood daybed (shown, \$520,000 to \$780,000); and a rare marble tub (about \$195,000 to \$260,000). If only we could scrub like royalty. Information: christies.com. **STEVEN KURU**