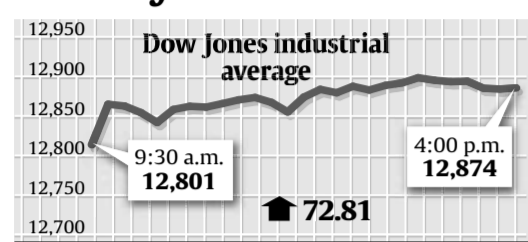


TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2012

Moneyline

Monday markets



Index	Close	Change
Nasdaq composite	2931.39	▲ 27.51
Standard & Poor's 500	1351.77	▲ 9.13
Treasury note, 10-year yield	1.98%	unch.
USA TODAY Internet 50	190.29	▲ 2.25
Oil, light sweet crude, barrel	\$100.91	▲ 2.24
Euro (dollars per euro)	\$1.3202	▲ 0.0032
Yen per dollar	77.61	▲ 0.01

Source: USA TODAY research, MarketWatch.com

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Some European nations' credit ratings cut

Rating agency Moody's Investors Service has downgraded its credit ratings on Italy, Portugal and Spain, while lowering the outlook for its triple-A ratings on France, the United Kingdom and Austria to "negative" from "stable." Moody's also cut ratings on Slovakia, Slovenia and Malta. It says it took the actions due to the uncertainty on European Union financial reforms, the region's weak economic outlook and pressure on fragile markets. Standard & Poor's and Fitch cut ratings on Spanish financial institutions, after both cut ratings on the nation's government debt.

U.S., Europe OKs Google, Motorola deal

U.S. regulators have approved Google's \$12.5 billion bid for Motorola Mobility. The announcement came hours after Google won clearance in Europe. Google still needs approval from China, Taiwan and Israel before completing the deal. Google is counting on Motorola Mobility Holdings' more than 17,000 patents, a big weapon in an intellectual arms race to gain more control of smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices.

Door fires in some TrailBlazers scrutinized

Federal safety regulators are investigating fires in the driver-side doors of Chevy TrailBlazers. The inquiry involves more than 309,000 TrailBlazer SUVs from the 2006 and 2007 model years. The fires began in the power window switch or related electrical parts, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said. The agency has received 12 complaints of smoke or fires in TrailBlazers. No injuries have been reported, says the SUV's maker, General Motors.

Empire State Realty Trust plans \$1B IPO

The company that runs the Empire State Building is planning an initial public offering that could raise up to \$1 billion. Empire State Realty Trust owns and operates 12 properties in New York's metro area. The company didn't say in its filing how many shares might be involved in the IPO or what price they might fetch. The \$1 billion amount is subject to investor demand.

Briefly ...

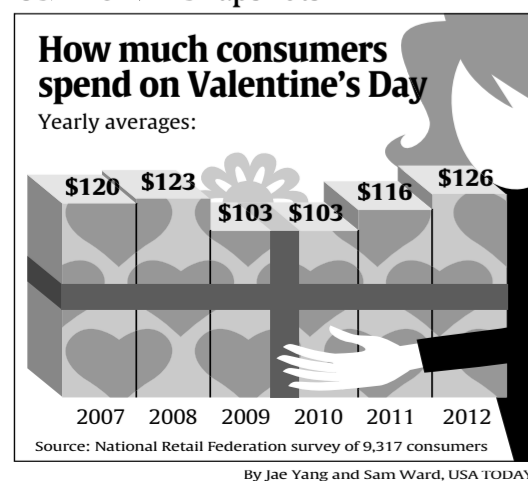
General Electric says it will hire 5,000 military veterans in the next five years and invest \$580 million to expand its aviation business. GE said its "Hire Our Heroes" plan will help match veterans with jobs, while its aviation unit will add more than 400 manufacturing jobs and open three new plants. ... The Teamsters union said members at **Hostess Brands** voted to authorize a strike if a bankruptcy judge OKs a company request to cut health and pension benefits. Hostess, which had no comment, has said cuts would be the only way it can reorganize into viability.

From Associated Press reports

Find tax tips online

Find the latest tax stories and tips at taxes.usatoday.com

USA TODAY Snapshots®



Source: National Retail Federation survey of 9,317 consumers



By Eileen Blasz, USA TODAY
No checking: Carl Woodin limits himself to carry-on bags.

Pros on the Road

Keeping it simple

Carl Woodin has worked out a series of short-cuts that make it easier for him to fly. Read about it at travel.usatoday.com

comments@lavozdemexico.com.mx

COVER STORY



By Mark Garfinkel for USA TODAY

Out \$40,000: Beatrice Hernandez, left, and Melba Abreu have been married since 2004. They say the prohibition against filing joint returns has cost them more than \$40,000 in additional taxes.

Tax time can be costly nightmare for gay couples

Several states recognize same-sex marriage, but feds don't. And there's the rub

By Sandra Block USA TODAY

Few taxpayers look forward to tax season, but the annual obligation is particularly laborious for tens of thousands of same-sex couples who live in states that recognize gay marriage or civil unions. Some have to put together four tax returns. Others have to prepare five. Preparation fees can cost thousands of dollars, and refunds may be delayed for months. The reason: Most states that recognize same-sex marriage or domestic partners allow couples to file a joint state tax return. State tax

returns, though, are based on the taxpayer's federal tax return. And because the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) prohibits the federal government from recognizing same-sex marriage, these couples can't file jointly with the IRS. To get around this conflict, same-sex couples who want to file joint state tax returns must each complete an individual tax return to file with the IRS. They use information from those returns to create a mock joint federal tax return, combining their income, adjustments and credits, and use that return to prepare their joint state tax return.

"It's really a complicated affair because of DOMA," says Melba Abreu, chief financial officer for a non-profit in Boston. Abreu, 56, and her longtime partner, Beatrice Hernandez, 50, were married in 2004. They file a joint tax return with

Please see COVER STORY next page ▶



By Jud McCreeth

More on marriage and money, 8A

▶ **People say 'I do' to buying wedding insurance**

▶ **Your Money: Getting hitched? Don't fall for money myths**

Apple's stock powers past \$500

Market value makes tech titan the world's biggest

By Matt Krantz USA TODAY

A falling apple proves the law of gravity. The price of Apple stock is proving otherwise — soaring past \$500 a share for the first time on Monday.

Powered by the popularity of its mobile devices, such as the iPhone, Apple's stock continues its breathtaking rise that knocks down any thresholds that stand in its way. The latest was the \$500-a-share barrier, a new record, as the stock stormed \$9.18 higher to \$502.60.

Last month, Apple trounced ExxonMobil as the most valuable company in the world. Now, Apple's market value is worth 16% more than Exxon's. Shares of Apple have enjoyed a 40% rise since last February and a nearly 500% gain from five years ago.

"It's a once-in-a-generation company that reinvents markets and does no wrong," says Michael Wallke, analyst at Canaccord Genuity.

Apple's astounding rise and dominance of almost any market it taps is allowing investors to thumb their noses at all the conventional wisdom about stocks, including: ▶ **Group inspecting Apple suppliers, 7A**

Rising stock

Apple shares closed \$500 for the first time Monday	Other similar milestones for Apple stock:	Monday
\$500	July 26, 2011	
\$400	Oct. 13, 2010	
\$300	Dec. 26, 2007	

Source: USA TODAY research

▶ **Big companies, eventually, have difficulty maintaining their growth rates.** As companies go from tiny startups to big-cap publicly traded companies, eventually their growth rates moderate. That's been the case at Microsoft, Intel and even Google. But Apple continues to post growth like a corporate whippersnapper. Apple's revenue grew 68% last year. Its fastest rate of growth in the past five years, S&P Capital IQ says. Profit, too, jumped 98%, also the fastest clip of growth in the past five years.

▶ **Investors need to diversify.** With Apple's stock rising so quickly and consistently, some investors might wonder if it's the only stock they need. Most analysts have price targets on the stock of \$560 or much more. "With this leg up (in the stock), it's been an almost unimpeded move from \$350 a share to almost \$500," says Scott Kessler of Standard & Poor's, who has a \$650 price target. Apple stock rose 26% last year and was the 55th-best stock in the S&P 500. This year, it's already up 24%, making it the 46th best, a respectable return, given its sheer size.

▶ **While Apple has elbowed aside most competitors,** there are long-term risks, says Michael Holt of Morningstar. Some wonder if lower-price smartphones could be more popular in emerging nations. But for now, there's more "upside," he says. "Everyone agrees the near-term momentum is unstoppable."

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Nationline

Washington state legalizes gay marriage

Gov. Chris Gregoire signed a bill Monday legalizing same-sex marriage in Washington state, making it the seventh in the nation to allow gay and lesbian couples to wed. "I'm proud our same-sex couples will no longer be treated as separate but equal," the Democrat said.

The law takes effect June 7, but opponents are preparing to fight. Pastor Joe Fuiten and other opponents said they would file a ballot challenge that would require voters in November to either uphold or overturn the law. If the referendum gets enough signatures, the law will be put on hold pending the outcome of a November vote.

Also Monday: ▶ **New Jersey's state Senate passed a bill to recognize same-sex marriages.** The bill has strong support in the state House, but Republican Gov. Chris Christie has promised a veto.



By Willfredo Lee, AP

Danger at the beach

No swimming: Lifeguard Jonathan Hartman, left, keeps an eye out as flags warning swimmers to stay out of the water in Hallandale Beach, Fla. Tests found high levels of a bacteria that can cause gastrointestinal and other illnesses.

Girl accused in Columbine High attack

A female student attacked two students with a hammer at Colorado's Columbine High — once the scene of one of the most deadly school shootings in U.S. history — authorities said.

Jefferson County School District security director John McDonald said the 14-year-old suspect targeted a 15-year-old girl in a bathroom. A male student saw the attack developing and was injured while stopping it. McDonald said he could not immediately release details of the injuries. The Littleton high school was the scene of one of the worst school attacks in U.S. history. Two students opened fire on April 20, 1999, killing 12 classmates and a teacher and wounding 26 others before killing themselves.

Florida A&M hazing victim sues bus line

The parents of a Florida A&M band member who died after being hazed filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against the owner and driver of the charter bus where the ritual took place.

The suit says hazing included forcing pledges to run from the front to the back of the bus while other band members slap, kick and hit them. In another ritual, a pillow case was placed over the pledge's nose and mouth while the pledge was forced to answer questions. A pledge with a wrong answer was given another question without a chance to take a breath, the lawsuit says.

The lawsuit says a company managers knew about the hazing but ignored it. Ray Land, owner of Fabulous Coach Lines, had no comment.

Library releases Jackie Kennedy papers

The John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum released some of former first lady Jacqueline Kennedy's personal papers that her children donated to the library.

The papers include script changes for the first lady's Feb. 14, 1962, televised tour that library officials said drew 80 million viewers after syndication. Library Director Tom Putnam said the papers show the range of Kennedy's understanding of art, history and public diplomacy.



By Joseph Kaczmarek, AP

Demonstration in uniform

Speaking out: Retired Philadelphia police captain Ray Lewis, who was arrested in uniform during an Occupy Wall Street protest in New York City last year, speaks to members of the news media at a protest Monday in Philadelphia.

Quake rattles Northern California

A moderate earthquake struck Northern California's coast, rattling nerves around the Oregon border but yielding no immediate reports of major injury or damage, officials said.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude-5.6 quake struck at 1:07 p.m. about 18 miles east of Trinidad. The epicenter was a rural area near the small community of Weitchpec, about 220 miles northwest of Sacramento.

High Court justice robbed in Caribbean

The FBI is investigating the robbery of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer at his West Indies vacation home by a machete-wielding suspect, authorities said.

Breyer, 73, wife Joanna and guests were confronted by the robber Thursday on the island of Nevis, Supreme Court spokeswoman Kathy Arberg said. No one was injured, but the suspect made off with about \$1,000. — Kevin Johnson

By John Bacon with staff and wire reports

Please recycle

Universities add courses with Occupy focus

Professor wants class to examine protest movement

By Natalie DiBlasio Special for USA TODAY

The Occupy movement is starting to set up camp in university courses. Professors are adding catalogs, syllabuses and classrooms. There are new course offerings and a new focus in older ones.

Professor Jeff Edwards, who is teaching "Occupy Everywhere" at Roosevelt University in Chicago this semester, says a third of the political science majors there are enrolled in the course.

Roosevelt allows professors to teach a class one time before the

official approval process as long as the department approves it, Edwards says. In his view, the Occupy movement, which started in September near New York's Wall Street as a protest against economic inequality, is having enough of an impact on American culture to stand alone in its own course. "This movement is playing out in front of us, and I thought it would be negligent if I didn't create a space for our students to evaluate it," Edwards says.

Several other universities have moved quickly to fashion Occupy courses this semester: ▶ **Brown University's** visiting Assistant Professor Derek Seidman created a seminar, "The Occupy Movement in Historical Context," after an Occupy teach-in at the university in October attracted about 600 people.

University of California-San Diego Professor Ivan Evans' course "Social Movements" is zeroing in on the Occupy movement this semester. "Now we focus on the organization and structure of social movements because of Occupy's unique model," Evans says.

▶ **New York University** offers "Cultures and Economics: Why Occupy Wall Street? The History and Politics of Debt and Finance," taught by Professor Lisa Duggan. Roosevelt student Anna Gurevich, 19, has gotten a "mixed bag" of reactions when she talks to people about taking the course.

"You get people who laugh it off and say, 'That's not a college course' or 'That's silly,'" Gurevich says. "Some people say it should just be part of another course on social

movements, but a lot of people think it's a very good course offering." "I just cannot support a university such as Roosevelt that teaches students on OWS," counters Roosevelt alumni and Occupy movement opponent David Lempe. "The youth should not study a group of individuals that seem to enjoy causing trouble more than spreading political beliefs."

At Columbia University, an Occupy course was listed to be available this spring on the university's website, but it did not run because it hadn't gone through the approval process, says Vice President for Public Affairs Brian Connolly. Connolly says it had nothing to do with the content of the course and a class of that nature is something Columbia would consider for the future.

Recognizing slave burial grounds

Initiative aims to find lost grave sites with help from descendants of deceased

By Rick Jervis USA TODAY

NEW ORLEANS — For decades, the stretch of grassy land in an elbow of the Mississippi River held no trace of the people buried underneath.

No signs, markers or tombstones pointed to the more than 300 African-American former slaves buried in two cemeteries about 20 miles west of New Orleans. Only a handful of people knew they ever existed, despite their being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Now, the Army Corps of Engineers, which owns the land, and local historians are reaching out to descendants of the deceased and planning a memorial at the grave sites commemorating the lives and deaths of those buried. "There's no real record or lists of people who are buried there," says Chris Brantley, a corps project manager heading the initiative. "We felt it was proper to let other visitors know these sites do exist."

An estimated 6 million African and African-American slaves lived and died in the United States — from the colonial era to the Civil War — but scant records exist on where they are all buried, says Paul Mullins, president of the Society for Historical Archeology.

The National Register of Historic Places lists 17 historical African-American cemeteries. Slaves often were buried in unmarked plots in a corner of the plantation where they worked, and few records were kept of their burials, he says. "There are countless numbers of them," Mullins says of the cemeteries. "We just don't know where they are."

Over the past two decades, excavation crews making room for highways, homes and buildings have uncovered several slave cemeteries, Mullins says. Discoveries include: ▶ **Workers excavating land for a federal building in Lower Manhattan in 1991** found the first skeletal remains of more than 400 men, women and children, later determined to be colonial-era African slaves, according to the National Park



By Cheryl Gerber for USA TODAY

Memorial in the works: Chris Brantley, of the Army Corps of Engineers, stakes markers at the Bonnet Carre Spillway site where about 150 slaves were buried in the 19th century.

Two years after the Great Flood of 1927, the Army Corps purchased 7,000 acres of the surrounding land and turned it into the Bonnet Carre Spillway to alleviate pressure from a rising Mississippi River to prevent New Orleans from flooding, Brantley says. It's not known whether corps officials knew of the cemeteries at the time, he says. Over time and with repeated rushes of water from the spillway, the cemeteries vanished under a layer of sediment, he says.

In the mid-1970s, workers draining a corner of the spillway unearthed a chunk of marble headstone, casket pieces and human remains. The headstone belonged to Sanders Ray, a former slave who joined the invading Union army during the Civil War, he says. Ray belonged to Company H, 10th U.S. Colored Heavy Artillery unit, which kept watch for Confederate ships at the mouth of the Mississippi, he says. He received an army pension and was given a military burial.

Ray's descendants led corps officials to another nearby cemetery containing African-American remains, Brantley says. The corps plans to plant live oak trees and rows of bushes around the site and erect an informational placard describing the history of the area and the people buried there, Brantley says. The descendants wanted the bodies to stay put but applauded the corps' effort to build a memorial, he says.

Those buried there, long covered over with silt, should be remembered, says Jeanette Coleman, 73, Ray's great-granddaughter. "They should be recognized for who they are and what they stood for," she says. "We can't erase history."

Judge: Sandusky can visit friends, grandchildren

By Kevin Johnson USA TODAY

A Pennsylvania judge eased bail restrictions Monday on former Penn State University assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky, allowing him visits with most of his grandchildren and close friends as he awaits trial on child sex abuse charges.

The judge also rejected a separate prosecution request that a jury in Sandusky's upcoming trial be drawn from outside the State College area. Although defense attorney Joe Amendola said his client is both "relieved and pleased" by Senior Judge John Cleland's decisions, legal analysts said the jury ruling is most important to Sandusky's May 14 trial.

By ensuring that jurors are drawn from the Penn State area, Widener University law professor Wes Oliver said, Amendola is likely hoping that the jury pool will include people who knew Sandusky, charged with 52 counts of abuse involving 10 children, as one of the architect's of Penn State's football success. "Sandusky just needs to find one person who will put more weight on his football reputation," Oliver said.

"I'm sure they are looking for anyone who knows Sandusky as one of the best defensive coordinators in the nation," said attorney Jeffrey Lindy, who has dealt with child sex abuse cases as a prosecutor and defense lawyer. Meanwhile, former Penn State athletic director Tim Curley asked a judge to dismiss perjury charges related to the sex abuse scandal, saying that the death of coach Joe Paterno removes a witness crucial to the case that Curley led to a grand jury about an alleged sexual assault involving Sandusky. There was no immediate ruling on Curley's request.

Decreased presence of massive lionfish in Mexican reefs

The presence of lionfish, an invasive species present in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, has declined in the country through a program of massive fishing of this species, reported the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) of Mexico.

The National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) launched in 2009 a plan to control lionfish, by which have been captured to date "about 20,000 copies of this invasive species in springs, coral, marine sea grass, mangrove swamps and estuaries," said the SEMARNAT in a statement.

Most of the catches have taken place in the protected areas of the Yucatan Peninsula and the Mexican Caribbean, in the reserves of the Banco Chinchorro Biosphere, San Ka'an and Lagartos River.

Also in the Alacranes Reef National Park, Isla Mujeres,

Punta Cancun and Punta Nizuc, Isla Contoy, Cozumel Reefs, Xcalak, Tulum and Puerto Morelos Reef. The holder of SEMARNAT, Juan Rafael Elvira Quesada, said in the note that with the support of organizations The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International and Coral Reef Alliance, the Mexican government offers "workshops for the capture and control of this species, to avoid any risk to human and reefs."

Lionfish, also known as zebra or fire fish, was introduced in 1992 to the seas of the Caribbean through Florida (USA) due to poor management in aquariums and by individuals who like that sort exotic adornment.

The animal has come north to the shores of New York, and south to Venezuela. For its part, the director of the Biosphere Reserve Banco Chinchorro, Maria del Carmen Garcia, said that

among the imbalances caused by invasive species is the "predation, changes in the structure and composition of communities, loss of wild populations" and degradation of ecological functions and processes on land and sea. There is also "reduced genetic diversity, disease transmission to wildlife and extinction of endemic species," she said.

The expert said that the danger of the lionfish is multiplied "by the high rate of reproduction, the female lays 15,000 to 30,000 eggs constantly," ie "1.2 to 2.5 million eggs annually with great potential to spread".

Mexican authorities have released a campaign aimed at communities and fishermen through lectures, workshops, brochures and posters, "to raise awareness of the danger it poses to ecosystem health and economic and tourism development," concluded the SEMARNAT.