

GENERATIONAL LEGACY

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CHINESE ACQUIRERS LOOM LARGER AS M&A BIDDERS

By Jaewon Kang

As more Chinese acquirers search across the consumer space globally for investment opportunities, private-equity investors could soon start to feel the heat.

Strategic and financial players from the world's second largest economy are betting shoppers in China will become more health-conscious and remain hungry for premium consumer products as they get richer.

With Chinese acquirers

quickly learning the ropes of the Western deal market, they are emerging as a force to compete with local private-equity investors for targets in the consumer sector.

"It's rare for us to have a sell-side process where you're not giving a real thought about Asian buyers—whether they're from China or Japan or what

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CONSUMER HEALTH CARE ATTRACTS WIDER RANGE OF COMPETITORS

By Laura Cooper

Health-care investors used to having the sector largely to themselves are beginning to feel the competitive heat from their deep-pocketed consumer-focused peers.

Speaking at the Jefferies 2017 Global Healthcare Conference in June, Jay Wilkins, a senior managing director at Harvest Partners, said consumer-focused private-equity firms have been "sniffing around a lot more" at consumer-facing health-care companies these days, particularly within the dental and veterinary spaces.

As a result, health care-focused firms have faced stiffer competition for health-care businesses focused on the consumer market, Mr. Wilkins said on the sidelines of the conference.

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Sampling of recently closed transactions



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About Generational Group

Generational Group is a global mergers and acquisitions firm focusing on the middle market assisting clients in mergers, acquisitions and strategic growth. With over two hundred professionals, Generational Group brings a strategic domestic and international buying community to the middle market.

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GENERATIONAL GROUP NEWS & NOTES

From the Desk of Ryan Binkley, President, The Generational Group

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Fall 2017-Winter 2018 issue of Generational Group Legacy, our newsletter developed in partnership with Dow Jones & Co. At the Generational Group of companies we understand that selling a business is often the most important financial event that occurs in the life of a business owner. Our goal with each issue of the Legacy is to provide you with key information about M&A trends. We also look at current issues and emerging business developments that are important to you. You will also find some general human interest stories that we hope you find enjoyable to read.

The M&A market continues to be very favorable for business owners right now. Barring a major geopolitical event, we expect the current level of buyer activity to continue for the foreseeable future given the significant amount of capital available with both strategic and financial buyers. Simply put, there is more cash available than there are deals in the market, driving higher valuations. You will learn more about current M&A market conditions in our conference today.

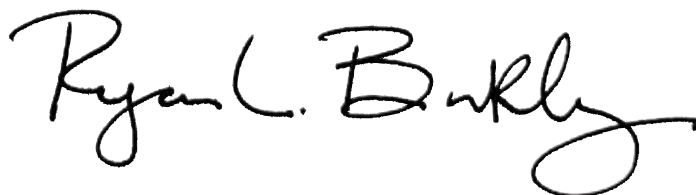
Most entrepreneurs that we work with have a significant portion of their net worth tied up in their companies. And nearly all hope to create a financial legacy that they can leave to their children and grandchildren. Attending a Generational Group exit planning conference is an important first step in understanding the process involved to eventually exit your company for maximum value.

The Generational Group is one of the leading M&A advisory firms in North America with the experience and knowledge to guide you through one of the most challenging and important decisions you will ever make. While a successful transaction is the ultimate goal, rest assured our team is dedicated to a rewarding and personalized client experience in your journey.

This is the Generational Way.

I'm sure you'll enjoy our conference and find this edition of Generational Group Legacy to be informative and helpful as you run your business. I wish you continued success in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,



Ryan Binkley
President and CEO
Generational Group

BE IT OIL, GAS OR WATER, BUYERS SEE MIDSTREAM OPPORTUNITY

By Luis Garcia

Private-equity firms are raising their bets on the U.S. midstream energy sector as booming exploration in the Permian Basin increases the need for infrastructure to handle not only oil, but the gas and water flowing from the region's wells.

Intense drilling activity in the Permian Basin of West Texas and southern New Mexico is approaching the limit of the region's existing oil-and-gas infrastructure. Crude-oil production is expected to surpass takeaway capacity in the Permian—which was at 2.6 million barrels a day—by the end of this year, according to a January report from industry data provider Drillinginfo Inc.

"We're quickly running up against not just takeaway capacity constraints, but gathering constraints," said Sarp Ozkan, Drillinginfo's manager for energy analytics.

The heightened demand has encouraged private-equity firms to step up their investments in Permian midstream ventures. Rangeland Energy, Medallion Midstream LLC and Oryx Midstream Services LLC—backed by EnCap Flatrock Midstream, Energy & Minerals Group and Quantum Energy Partners, respectively—are some of the midstream companies expanding their oil-gathering and transport systems in the region, including the laying of hundreds of miles of pipeline.

The midstream investments don't stop at oil, though. The Permian drilling boom is also increasing the output of natural gas produced together with oil—and is attracting private-equity capital as well, The Wall Street Journal reported. The article highlighted Blackstone Group LP's agreement to acquire EagleClaw Midstream Ventures LLC, a gas-focused pipeline company, for \$2 billion in April.

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PREPPING FOR INVESTMENTS IN THE MEAL-KIT MARKET

By Jaewon Kang



Will private equity find ways to cook up investments in the prepared-meal delivery services sector as a variety of players battle for the hundreds of millions of dollars at stake?

Campbell Soup Co. recently injected \$10 million into meal-kit startup Chef'd LLC, sealing one of the latest transactions in a space that is gaining popularity as consumers increasingly look for convenient and novel dining experiences.

The success of early movers such as Blue Apron Inc. and Grocery Delivery E-Services USA Inc., which operates as HelloFresh, also has contributed to the sector's growth. Blue Apron, which counts Bessemer Venture Partners and First Round Capital among its largest investors, just filed last week to go public. In recent months, SunBasket Inc. and Relish Labs LLC also have secured investments.

Investors of all stripes are likely eyeing hungrily the sector's growth prospects. The meal-kit delivery services sector is estimated to generate a compound annual growth rate of 30.8% from 2016 to 2021, according to Morningstar Inc. Despite the fact that meal-kit services represent less than 1% of total food and beverage sales, the investment firm wrote in an April report, loyal subscribers spend as much as 13% of their food purchases on such meal-kits.

The Chef'd deal underscores strategic buyers' growing interest in meal-kit services to expand their online-commerce presence. At the same time, it also raises the question of where private-equity investors fit in the sector and what role they may be able to play.

Venture capital has already demonstrated strong interest, flocking to meal-kit providers at various stages of their development. By contrast, private equity has largely stayed on the sidelines of the still-nascent industry, waiting for the players to reach more attractive levels of profitability and scale. As they remain

continued on page 16, see MEAL-KIT

AN ENTREPRENEUR'S TALE CAN BE THE PERFECT MARKETING VEHICLE

By Barbara Haislip

Have you heard the one about the company with a really great story to tell?

You see them on company websites and commercials. Businesses, particularly small ones with limited marketing budgets, use stories about their company to grab the attention of consumers, lenders and investors. Whether the tales are about the founding of the firm or how it affects customers, stories can be a powerful tool, resonating more deeply than facts and figures or traditional product pitches.

"Emotions and motivations shape cognition, which is why good stories stay with us," says Angela Randolph, assistant professor at Babson College. "People are more likely to remember emotional information than nonemotional."

But shaping a narrative to really grab and hold people's attention involves a lot of subtleties. Here's a look at some of those secrets.

Do some myth making

Effective business narratives tap into old archetypes of storytelling that go all the way back to the earliest tales of mythology. "Stories about founders and new innovations are often in the form of a myth and follow the hero's journey," says Dr. Randolph.

Like the heroes of classic tales, she says, the company founder is going about a normal life when they run into a problem that interrupts it. After this call to action, the founder undergoes trials that must be overcome—and along the way transforms into a leader and the idea turns into a product. Then the

founder returns to "normal" life as an entrepreneur with a product or service for society.

Founders should keep that structure in mind when coming up with their own narrative, she says, and then highlight important points.

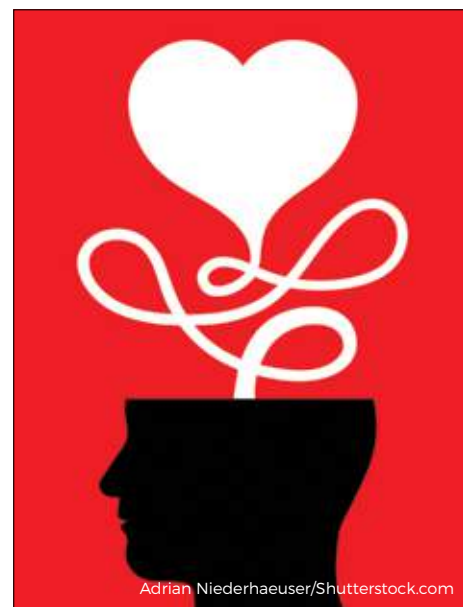
"For example, if the product is the result of a family member being injured or dying, the strong, sad emotions associated with the tragedy are the strong call to action that pulls the audience in," she says. Also highlight "favorable characteristics that founder exhibited during the trial and/or the new characteristics that are the result of the trials."

Focus on images

Company founders should be sure to flesh out their narrative with memorable images. "Humans are hard wired as visual creatures," says Hannah Harvey, a scholar and professional storyteller who tells tales and leads workshops at festivals, among other places. An audience will remember the images far longer than abstract goals or values.

That can mean using visual images to accompany a company story on a website, but also using evocative imagery within a narrative. Dr. Harvey uses examples from her grandfather, Tom Little, who used stories to welcome hires and forge relationships with clients at his construction business.

"In the early years, picking up two employees in his battered truck in the dark on the way to work each morning, after drinking steaming hot coffee at his kitchen table before his two little girls woke up. These images were entwined in his



Adrian Niederhaeuser/Shutterstock.com

telling of his company's story—and the images stick with you: the nip of a cold morning on your skin, steam from the coffee, a waving hand as you drove through the gate," she says. "The values of early hours, hard work, leadership that labors alongside you—these values sound great, but...you won't remember them five minutes after I stop talking. But you'll remember how that cold air felt on your skin, and the coffee, and the image of the man at the gate."

So, founders should think about what strong images they have that will connect with potential customers. "You already have them in your head," Dr. Harvey says. "Where were you when you first got the idea for your company? Who was your first employee? What were the textures in that room, the weather outside, an object that was central to the experience of that day?"

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SENATE BILL AIMS TO CLARIFY SMALL BUSINESS SECURITY

By Adam Janofsky

By approving a cybersecurity bill meant to help small businesses, cybersecurity experts said the U.S. Senate has taken the first step toward encouraging businesses of all sizes to use basic security practices that can help fend off sophisticated cyberattacks.

The bill's core provision directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to "disseminate clear and concise resources for small business concerns to help reduce their cybersecurity risks." NIST publishes a widely-used cybersecurity framework that recommends best practices for securing data, including installing anti-virus software, backing up business data, and requiring multi-factor authentication to sign in to sensitive applications.

"The act itself isn't going to prevent future cyberattacks, but it might motivate a bigger percentage of small businesses to take action," said Jon Loew, chief executive of AppGuard LLC, a security software company that helps small businesses protect themselves against cyberthreats. "Small business are probably least prepared for this—they might not have dedicated information technology staff, and they certainly don't have a dedicated information security person—but the ramifications are more serious than at larger companies"

The bill, which received early support from lawmakers from both parties, was passed after several weeks of major data security disclosures, including a breach at Equifax Inc. that compromised the information of 143 million U.S. consumers and an attack on the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's system for storing public-company filings.

When the bill was introduced in March, Ann Beauchesne, senior

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EX-SHOE SHINER SEEKS TO POLISH HIS LEGACY

By David Benoit

Dennis Washington assembled a sprawling industrial empire based largely on instinct. The 83-year-old billionaire is now grappling with how to make sure it endures after him.

Mr. Washington started out in 1964 with a \$30,000 loan and a single bulldozer. Today, the privately held Washington Cos. comprises six private companies, one public company and a joint venture, running mines and railroads, building ships and designing jet wings—and generating more than \$2 billion a year in revenue.

Now it is set to close its biggest deal ever, a \$1.2 billion purchase that will add diamond mining near the Arctic Circle to the mix.

The entrepreneur's improbable rise turned a boy who grew up poor—he used to shine shoes in Washington state alongside a young Quincy Jones—into a Montana tycoon worth \$6 billion, according to Forbes.

Driving through his shipyards in Vancouver, where the first vessel in an \$8 billion contract with the Canadian government is nearing completion, Mr. Washington simplifies his collection of businesses: They all involve "big machines." They were strung together through a series of acquisitions that often launched him into lines of businesses he had no experience with, but poured off cash he could reinvest.

"I get some seeds in the ground, and I just keep plowing them," Mr. Washington says.

Like many family-run businesses and even some public companies—including that of his friend Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc.—his approach has created a difficult succession challenge: how to pass down Mr. Washington's intangible abilities. Mr. Washington says his goal is to ensure the group survives at least three generations.

Though his two grown sons are involved, they aren't interested in running the operations, Washington officials say. Instead, he has turned to three good friends, well-known businessmen themselves: David Batchelder, a pioneer activist investor; Stephen Hanks, who ran Mr. Washington's construction company; and David Sokol, once viewed as a potential successor to Mr. Buffett.



KAMIL BIALOUS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Mr. Washington who grew up poor now runs a business with more than \$2 billion in revenue.

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IGNORING CYBERRISK CAN BE A COSTLY MISTAKE FOR SMES

By Adam Janofsky

For mom-and-pop stores and other small businesses, cyberattacks can seem like a distant worry compared to regular concerns such as securing loans, filing taxes, and competing with online giants.

But a majority of businesses experienced a cybersecurity incident in the past year, and about 38% of hacked businesses spent more than \$50,000 responding to cyberattacks, according to a study that will be released by The Hartford Steam Boiler Inspection and Insurance Co., a cyberinsurance provider.

"A lot of small businesses have the 'It won't happen to me' mentality," Eric Cernak, the U.S. cybersecurity and privacy practice leader for HSB, adding that about 7% of hacked businesses spend more than \$250,000 responding to the cyberincident, which can be devastating for a small firm. "What they're not realizing is they might be a target simply because of who they're doing businesses with."

The study, which surveyed 403 executives across the U.S., found that the most common costs associated with these incidents were data loss and business interruption, and roughly one-third of respondents said they also experienced physical damage to their equipment and reputational damage.

The report also found that businesses are most concerned with cyberincidents stemming from so-called insider threats. Disgruntled or negligent employees were the biggest cyberrisk for 44% of respondents, compared to the 37% who said hackers were their top concern.

Small business owners are increasingly finding that the threats are real, and can be expensive.

Cindi Gondek, the chief executive of ACT Group, a 3-D printing company with 30 employees, said an insider threat incident cost her company about \$200,000 in legal fees and a forensic investigation after she discovered a former employee had attempted to steal a vast amount of data from the Connecticut company in 2015.

"He downloaded our customer database to a Dropbox account—he had access to it because he ran one of our departments," said Ms. Gondek, adding that a computer forensic specialist determined that the employee downloaded enough documents to fill a tractor-trailer if they were printed out. "He was definitely trying to start his own business."

Ms. Gondek, who was not involved in the HSB study, said she settled with the former employee in court and obtained a three year non-compete agreement that prevents him from courting her customers.

She also changed her company's policies to make it harder for employees to download customer data. The company now uses a customer relationship management platform that makes it easier to secure client information, and employees are given tablets instead of laptops to limit the amount of information they can download.

"We now have more control over our information, and it makes it harder for someone to repeat what happened," she said. "You learn from your experiences and you move on."



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NEW IN BOARDROOMS: THE BUDDY SYSTEM

By Joann S. Lublin

Amy Chang got unusually frank feedback when the new director of Cisco Systems Inc. walked out of her first board meeting last December.

Longtime board member Carol Bartz chided the then-39-year-old tech executive for apologizing when she posed questions during the meeting.

"You have the right to ask questions," said Ms. Bartz, a Cisco director since 1996. Ms. Chang says the guidance helped her understand how things worked on the networking giant's board, though she had been a corporate director elsewhere.

More boards are pairing new members like Ms. Chang with seasoned mentors like Ms. Bartz as they scramble to improve their oversight of management in the face of intensified investor scrutiny. Board

buddies can help newcomers figure out the boardroom's cultural norms, power brokers—and even the right place to sit.

Mentors make sure "you don't come in as a bull in a china shop," observes Steven R. Walker, managing director of the board-services group at the National Association of Corporate Directors.

A 2016 survey conducted by the association found that 33 of 296 U.S. companies with orientation programs for directors choose an experienced board member to guide their latest member. The boardroom buddy system was virtually unheard of five years ago, governance specialists say.

Businesses with formal mentoring efforts include Foot Locker Inc., Applied Materials Inc. and Nasdaq Inc.

Boards that integrate new members sooner should "make better decisions and produce better results for shareholders," said Rusty O'Kelly, head of the board consulting and effectiveness practice at recruiters Russell Reynolds Associates Inc. But the concept is so new that there is little concrete evidence that they actually accelerate the impact of newcomers.

Ms. Bartz, Cisco's independent lead director, became its first mentor when Ms. Chang joined the board last October. Ms. Bartz says "the biggest benefit is having an effective board member faster."

The best mentors counsel new directors before and after board meetings for at least six months, governance experts say. Without such hand-holding, new directors typically take about nine months to assimilate.

"It's a really efficient and practical way to assure that the new directors get the most out of the early meetings," says Dick Johnson, chief executive of Foot Locker. The sports retailer began a board mentorship program when its two newest members arrived in 2016.

Cisco directors endorsed the idea partly because some prior board recruits "weren't a good culture fit," says Cassandra Frangos, vice president of global executive talent at the San Jose, Calif., company.

Ms. Chang, a former Google Inc. executive who runs privately held tech firm Accompany Inc., spoke with Ms. Bartz for several hours before her inaugural Cisco board



DREW KELLY FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Amy Chang, left, and Carol Bartz at Cisco headquarters in San Jose, Calif.

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CORPORATE WORLD RECRUITS GENERALS

By Vanessa Fuhrmans



kuzmafoto/Shutterstock.com

At companies across America, generals are bringing battlefield lessons to business.

Software maker Red Hat Inc. and computer-security firm Symantec Corp. are among the employers turning to generals for help on numerous fronts, from corporate governance to grappling with cyberwarfare. At not-for-profit Florida Hospital, a retired general is developing global partnerships and leadership talent, while Finland's Cargotec Oyj has one running its rough-terrain-equipment unit in Texas.

Military brass have gained clout in the White House, too. Often referring to them as "my generals," the president has tapped a trio of leaders to impose order and shape his national-security policy. Retired Marine Corps Gen. John Kelly swiftly brought a forceful management style to his job as the president's new chief of staff, staffers say, while both Republicans and Democrats see Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, also a retired Marine Corps general, and national security adviser H.R. McMaster, an Army lieutenant

general, as calming forces in a turbulent presidency.

Discipline, though, is only one of the traits companies say military leaders bring to boards and management teams.

In the fog of war, and in peacetime, generals are trained to anticipate unknown risks, build high-functioning teams and make quick, strategic decisions in high-pressure situations. "They are the same traits necessary in the fog of business," says Henry Stoeber, a captain in the Marine Corps who is now chief marketing officer of the National Association of Corporate Directors.

The group has put some 500 retired generals and admirals through a three-day course to prepare them for corporate board duty; half of them now sit on private and public boards, including those of Wells Fargo & Co., USA Truck Inc. and aerospace supplier Wesco Aircraft Holdings Inc.

Companies, especially those in crisis, covet the reputational boost that comes from seeking the

counsel of a former military leader, says Wendy Monsen, president of executive recruiter Korn/Ferry's federal-government practice. Whereas more than three-quarters of Americans trust the military to act in the public's interest, according to a 2016 Pew Research Center survey, only 41% feel the same way about business leaders.

For companies seeking cybersecurity skills or geopolitical know-how, "general officers end up on our short list quite a bit for industry clients," says Ms. Monsen.

However, outside the defense industry, military brass remain rare in c-suites and boardrooms. The number of top executives who once served has shrunk over the decades as Vietnam War-era veterans have retired. Among S&P 500 firms, only 13 are led by former service members, and just under 5% of their combined board members are veterans, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence data.

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LIFESTYLE

LIVE LIKE AN ARISTOCRAT ON A TOUR OF ENGLAND'S STATELY HOMES

By Kate Maxwell

It was early on a summer morning in the walled garden at Wiveton Hall, a Jacobean estate on a marshy stretch of the north Norfolk coast, and Desmond MacCarthy was worrying about his salad leaves. Already nudging 90 degrees, the mercury was breaking English records, and Mr. MacCarthy, Wiveton's owner, feared that his leaves, destined for the estate cafe, would wilt.

You can bet the 17th-century merchant who built Wiveton Hall, a Dutch-gabled manor home whose flint-stone coat sparkles in the sunlight, didn't concern himself with such fripperies as vegetable husbandry. But up and down England, the custodians of ancient houses, the agricultural estates of which were either sold off centuries ago, or whose output no longer covers their staggering maintenance costs, are being forced to come up with creative ways to keep the tiles on the roof. Wiveton Hall's crayon-colored cafe—which serves slender asparagus with fried eggs on sourdough for breakfast; succulent crab-and-mayonnaise sandwiches at lunch, and is invariably full to its turquoise rafters—is one.

A perpetual headache for their highborn owners, this financial struggle is a boon for travelers, who are being given ever more access to sprawling stately piles—of which there is an abundance on Norfolk's so-called Royal Coast, a three-hour drive northeast of London. Desmond MacCarthy's program of "agricultural diversification," as the practice is known, is extensive. As well as the cafe, there are pick-your-own strawberries and



ANDY SEWELL FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Aside from touring Holkham Hall, where you can see manuscripts that pre-date the Magna Carta, visitors can roam the sprawling grounds, which include two cafes, a new Field-to-Fork exhibit and the stable blocks that have been turned into co-working spaces. A number of the estate's follies, arches and cottages have also been turned into elegant overnight accommodations for visitors.

accommodation in chocolate-box cottages and a field of fully furnished bell-tents. My family and I glamped for two nights, roasting marshmallows over our fire pit, while a barn owl glided overhead and a hedgehog thumped through the undergrowth.

Mr. MacCarthy's latest initiative is a maize maze, which his son, Edmund, had been tasked with scything. In Wiveton Hall's West Wing, which offers accommodations in four of its bedrooms, Desmond and I tiptoed around the ground floor, previously a ballroom,

hoping not to wake the guests above. For Mr. MacCarthy, letting out portions of his home is a necessary evil. "In a few years there'll probably be nine families here [at Wiveton Hall]," he said, mournfully. "It'll be like Dr. Zhivago." For now, Mr. MacCarthy's new status as a reality TV star is helping to keep the wolves from the door. Last year, he, along with assorted staff and his 102-year-old mother, Chloe, who still lives on the estate, became the subject of the BBC's "Normal for Norfolk" series about the family's efforts to maintain Wiveton Hall.

A few miles up the coast, Holkham Hall is a stately home on another scale, and it, too, is in the midst of a diversification drive. An 18th-century Palladian estate, Holkham encompasses 25,000 acres of land, 100 times that of Wiveton Hall, but tourism overtook farming in the revenue stakes long ago. I half-expected a giraffe or elephant to emerge from the sweeping, savannah-like parkland (instead, herds of fallow deer roamed). Elsewhere are swaths of woodland, grand fountains, soaring statues and ornamental lakes. Built by the 1st Earl of Leicester in the mid-18th century, Holkham Hall continues to be home to the Leicester family and is open three days a week between April and October; visitors can tour the grounds daily. You can peer inside the original, soaring kitchen, where copper pots gleam on the shelves; marvel at the collection of manuscripts that predate the Magna Carta and poke around the Long Library, where the current Earl of Leicester, Thomas Coke, likes to work on his laptop opposite a lion mosaic dating from the 2nd century B.C., a souvenir from an ancestor's European tour.

Since my last visit to the honey-stone Holkham estate, over a decade ago, a number of follies and cottages have been turned into elegant accommodation for visitors. We stayed in the Ancient House, its many ornate chimneys rising from a crenulate roof. Its Beach Café has been given a Scandi-style makeover, while a Field-to-Fork exhibit exploring the 18th-century innovations in livestock breeding and agricultural pioneered by the 1st Earl of Leicester opened this year. Stable blocks have been reimagined as co-working spaces as well as a studio for London jeweler Monica Vinader; her gold pendants hang in the gift shop.

All these efforts combine to appeal to the increasingly sophisticated visitors who “want an experience that’s a

bit more than an egg-and-cess sandwich made by the farmer’s wife,” said David Horton-Fawkes, Holkham’s estate manager. Still, Holkham’s greatest asset remains its coastal nature reserve, a 4-mile, white-sand beach backed by dunes and pine forest planted by the 3rd Earl of

Leicester in the 19th century. The beach spans such a width that you can feel, at low-tide, as if you’re crossing the desert, and stroll for an hour before reaching the water’s edge.

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THE LOWDOWN

STATELY HOME-HOPPING ON ENGLAND’S NORTH NORFOLK COAST

GETTING THERE There are no direct trains, so rent a car. You’ll need one to explore north Norfolk. It will take you around three hours to drive from Heathrow—take the M25, A11 and A1065.

STAYING THERE Wiveton Hall’s West Wing sleeps nine people and is available to rent by the week; its three cottages accommodate between four and six (from about \$685, wivetonhall.co.uk). A short walk from the cafe, six bell-tents have stoves and double beds with crisp white sheets, and share an immaculate shower block (about \$185 per night, two-night minimum, ambersbelltents.co.uk). The 20 rooms at Holkham’s Victoria Inn sport an elegant country look (from about \$240, holkham.co.uk). Each of Holkham’s four historic lodges, deep within the estate, sleeps two (from \$120, minimum two nights, barefootretreats.co.uk). Just opened near Burnham Market, the 12-room White House on Sussex Farm has a bold interior with mainly British fabrics and wallpapers. Rooms are available on a B&B basis, or you can rent the whole house (from about \$140, stayatthewhitehouse.co.uk).

TOURING THERE If you haven’t had your fill after Wiveton Hall, Holkham Hall and Sandringham, consider three more stately historic homes to visit in north Norfolk. For starters, Houghton Hall, another Palladian home, was built for Britain’s first prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole. Dating back to the 17th-century, Felbrigg Hall encompasses a stunning walled garden and 520 acres of parkland to explore. And redbrick Blickling Hall lies on the ruins of Anne Boleyn’s birthplace; her headless ghost is said to appear on each anniversary of her beheading (May 19).

EATING THERE The Gunton Arms is on the edge of the 1,000-acre deer park of a former estate that played host in the 1890s to actress and royal mistress Lillie Langtry; as well as serving fantastic food (whole dressed Cromer crab; pork belly with apple), it houses an impressive contemporary art collection, including work by YBAs (Young British Artists) Tracey Emin, Damien Hirst and Jonathan Yeo (Cromer Rd., Thorpe Market, theguntonarms.co.uk). In Burnham Overy Staithe, the Hero, so-called because of its proximity to the birthplace of naval hero Horatio Nelson, is fresh from a refurbishment and offers classics like haddock and chips, plus more inventive dishes (Wells Road, Burnham Overy Staithe, theheroburnhamovery.co.uk). For refined British food with French and Italian twists, in a laid-back environment, don’t miss 20 North Street. Housed in a former chapel, 20 North Street opened earlier this year with an alum of London’s top kitchens at the stove (20 North Street, Burnham Market, 20northstreet.co.uk). Make time for a meal at the Victoria at Holkham (see “Staying There”), and for fish-to-go, try Cley Smokehouse (High St.) or Gurney’s Fish Shop (28 Market Place, Burnham Market, gurneysfishshop.co.uk).



JAPAN FOR BEGINNERS: THE COUNTRY'S MOST EFFORTLESS CITY

By Dyan Machan



An undated photo of Fukuoka, Japan downtown city skyline.

It feels silly to apply the term “life affirming” to a bowl of noodles. But when I arrived in Fukuoka, dead-tired after the long flight from New York, and my lips met the ramen invented there, a pork-based variety called tonkotsu, no phrase seemed more apt. My husband, a composer and conductor, has a regular gig at an orchestra in this seaside city on Kyushu, Japan’s southernmost main island, and for the second year in a row, I tagged along. At my insistence, our first stop off the plane was a tiny ramen restaurant, where all the diners tucked their noses in earthenware bowls of the piquant pork-bone broth. The restaurant serves nothing else.

The city of Fukuoka, capital of the prefecture (or district) of the same name, permits a kind of effortless discovery that tourist-engorged Kyoto, sweet as it is, never could. Last year, 5 million foreigners visited

Kyoto, versus 2.8 million to Fukuoka. It feels untrammelled, unrushed, sophisticated without shouting. The primary pleasures of Japan’s more touristy cities—the history, the shrines, the food, the shops full of chic clothing and weird candies—can all be found in Fukuoka (population: 1.5 million) but in more manageable portions. Come spring, you’ll find American tourists, on their way from Tokyo or Kyoto, snooping around for cherry blossoms and sidling up to the yatai, the small mobile restaurants that are justly famous in this city. But plenty of locals will say that they should have come in autumn instead.

Fukuoka Prefecture extends some 1,900 square miles, wrapping around a crenulated coastline and forested mountains. In the fall, the region offers prime koyo—or autumnal leaf-viewing. Among the best ogling spots are the 1,000-year-old

temples in Dazaifu and in the Zen gardens at Komyozenji Temple, where, in November, maple trees tend to blaze a burnt-orange hue. Both, on the edge of Fukuoka city, are easily reachable by train. Determined leaf peepers also head to the gorge-spanning footbridge in Aburayama Shimin no Mori (Citizen’s Park). And at the Akizuki castle ruins, an hour’s drive from the city center, towering rows of butter-colored, elm-like zelkovas and aged scarlet maples near Kuro-mon’s gate rarely take a bad photo. Après koyo, you can plop down for tea in one of the traditional tea-shops nearby.

Back in Fukuoka city, the Hojoya festival, held every September near the Hakozaki shrine is apparently so worthwhile it’s lasted a thousand years. Ostensibly, the festival centers on revering nature’s abundance, with revelers releasing captive

animals like fish or frogs into a stream. But the real attraction seems to be the culinary abundance—myriad food stalls where people can pop takoyaki (fried octopus balls), among other Japanese snacks, down their gullets.

Fukuoka is an ancient gateway city, Japan's Ellis Island, its mixing pot. Buddhism first entered the country on Hakata Bay, on the city's northern shore, where migrants from Korea and China arrived. It's also where green tea and noodles first came through, starting a craze that's continued since Marco Polo.

The day after we arrived, we met up with a guide—Takakuni Kosuge, a 60-something retired Panasonic executive. I arranged the private tour through Fukuoka SGG, or "Systematized Goodwill Guide," a cohort of locals who volunteer to help tourists. First up was lunch. He took us to Chikae, a seafood restaurant near the city's trendy Daimyo district. I ordered a live squid, which arched its tentacles when the kimono-clad waitress squirted it with lemon. "You must get used to it tickling in your stomach," said Mr. Kosuge. Seeing my distress, he directed the waitress to redeliver the squid as tempura.

After lunch, he took us to the ruins of Fukuoka Castle, a relatively little-known site in Maizuru Park, which occasionally pops up on those lists of "best spring and autumn color spots." But I was more interested in the history than the horticulture. Legions of samurai once lived in the protection of the castle. In 1281, Kublai Khan attacked Hakata Bay, mobilizing 4,000 ships and 140,000 warriors to conquer Kyushu island. With only shields and tricked-out headgear, the city's 40,000 samurais were outmanned and outgunned, but miraculously won the day. It helped that a well-timed typhoon shredded a third of the Mongols' boats.

The castle's stone walls were as thick as a bus, covered with moss and miniature ferns. Cats scattered under a pine. Steps away, a gray building that looked like an airplane hangar turned out to be the dimly lit Korokan museum displaying the remains of a centuries-old trading

outpost. Inside, a reconstructed room conjured images of Song Dynasty Chinese or Islamic traders meeting their Japanese counterparts. Only a handful of other visitors wandered around the museum and the castle, soaking up what felt like a secret history.

THE LOWDOWN FALLING FOR FUKUOKA

GETTING THERE You can fly into Fukuoka via Tokyo, or fly to Osaka and take the three-hour Shinkansen bullet train to Hakata station in Fukuoka for \$141.

EATING THERE At Chikae restaurant, the live seafood swim or crawl in front of diners in a warmly retro ambience (2-2-17 Daimyo, chikae.co.jp). Iroha's specialty is participatory dining a la chicken "mizutaki" hot pot in a homey setting where noteworthy guests' framed signatures adorn the walls (Iroha Building, 14-27 Kami-kawabata-machi, Hakata-ku). Mengekijo Genei serves life-affirming ramen (2-16-3 Yakuin, Chuo-ku). One of the two new stars of Fukuoka's 130 yatai, or street-side restaurants, is Telas and Mico, whose chef/owner came from London's Nobu and Zuma; try the coriander ramen or the wagyu beef on a leaf. The other new yatai star is Chez Rémy, which offers a Burgundy-in-Kyushu experience with garlicky escargot, pumpkin gnocchi and French wine (Both are located near Loft shopping center on Watanabe-dori Ave).

STAYING THERE Nishitetsu Grand Hotel is a bustling operation with a French-style bakery and stellar concierge service that makes up for low marks on the hipness scale (from \$100 a night, grand-h.jp/english).

TOURING THERE Fukuoka Now, a free-online magazine serves as an excellent all-around resource for news and current happenings (fukuoka-now.com/en). Fukuoka SGG (Systematized Goodwill Guide) provides prearranged volunteer guides for \$18 plus expenses (fukuokasggclub@gmail.com). Suito Fukuoka, a cultural center, offers tourists lessons on Japanese customs and culture, including sake tasting, Japanese gift-wrapping and calligraphy (1-2-29 Imaizumi, Chuo-ku, suito.inboundhub.jp).



STAR TURN Komyozenji Temple in Japan's Fukuoka Prefecture.

CONSUMER HEALTH

continued from 1

Consumer-focused private-equity firms, or consumer units within larger firms, have been dipping their toes into the sector for some time.

According to Nirad Jain, a health care-focused partner at consulting firm Bain & Co., interest in consumer-focused health-care companies may stem from investors bracing for a potential economic downturn.

“Health care is about 18% to 19% of GDP. It’s hard to be a fund of scale without exposure to health care,” said Mr. Jain. “At the end of the day, there are many aspects about running a retail store that will help customer experience. That’s one pillar of it.”

Mr. Wilkins said that as with traditional retail businesses, consumer investors are skilled at creating experiences that will bring customers back again and again.

And unlike much of the health-care sector, Mr. Wilkins said consumer firms are attracted to businesses like dental chains and vet clinics because of the limited reimbursement risk they face.

One recent example of a business moving from a firm with health-care expertise to one with a consumer-focused bent was the purchase late last year of Great Expressions Dental Centers, an Omers Private Equity-backed dental chain with 280 practices in 10 states, by Roark Capital Group. Roark, a firm focused on consumer brands and multiunit businesses, may be better known for its ownership of pretzel retail franchise Auntie Anne’s LLC and sports-themed restaurant Miller’s Ale House.

In addition, consumer-facing firms such as L Catterton have ongoing interest in the space. Among its active investments, L Catterton lists on its website PetVet Care Centers, an operator of veterinary hospitals and clinics; Caredent, a network of European dental clinics; and ClearChoice Holdings LLC, which provides clinical dental implant services.

For health care-focused private-equity firms, the interest by their consumer brethren in consumer-facing health-care deals may foster future partnerships. Mr. Wilkins said his firm has been approached by a consumer shop, with the aim of partnering on a deal in this hybrid space. Although he said Harvest hasn’t yet pursued this type of deal, it is clear to him that some consumer funds are interested in this kind of arrangement.

In addition, competition for deals may also encourage more collaboration within various units of private-equity firms. The marrying of consumer and health-care teams to get deals done would mirror the increasing collaboration between technology and health-care professionals at some firms.

If more consumer and health-care investors develop partnerships, expect to see more instances in which the private-equity backer of your favorite teen retailer or a taco chain becomes the owner of your local dental or vet clinic.



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M&A BIDDERS

continued from 1

have you—and what role they're going to play in the process," said Timothy Larsen, a managing director in the consumer, food and retail group at investment bank Houlihan Lokey Inc.

Within the consumer and retail space, categories relating to health and wellness, in particular, have garnered attention from Asian acquirers, said Mr. Larsen, adding that there has been a noticeable uptick in overseas interest for such companies with scale that are valued at \$500 million or more.

"If you think about the rapidly expanding middle class [in China] and how to deliver nutrition adequately to any economy of people that large, there is an interest in alternative sources of protein that are not dependent on animals," he said.

Emblematic of this is the strong interest demonstrated by Chinese bidders in the sale process for Nature's Bounty Inc., a maker of vitamins and nutritional supplements previously backed by Carlyle Group LP.

The sale process included several Chinese bidders, including vitamin giant BY-Health Co., as well as investment firms Primavera Capital Group, CDH Investments and PAG, said a person with knowledge of the deal.

Ultimately, in late July, KKR & Co. won out, agreeing to purchase a majority stake in the Ronkonkoma, N.Y.-based company in a deal that valued Nature's Bounty at about \$3 billion, said people familiar with the situation.

The rising spending power of consumers in China and the

corresponding increase in confidence by Chinese acquirers in the growth potential of such brands have been the most significant drivers of cross-border investment activities.

"If you look at Chinese consumers, they're getting more and more wealthy," said Hao Zhou, a Hong Kong-based partner at consulting firm Bain & Co. He added that buyers in the expanding Chinese middle class have demonstrated their willingness to embrace premium prices for quality products in the wellness, nutrition and juvenile categories.

"From the supply perspective, not many good quality brands are out there yet," Mr. Zhou said.

For Chinese buyers, the consumer sector has become an attractive area of investing because such brands are less likely to raise national security concerns and subsequently hinder regulatory approval processes. Meanwhile, these acquirers are using different tactics to seal consumer deals.

Some look to acquire Western companies in hopes of broadening the existing branding of such businesses in their own countries, said Mr. Larsen of Houlihan Lokey. Others are turning to acquisitions to expand the footprint of Chinese brands in North America by utilizing the continent's infrastructure.

"There's certain cache associated with our infrastructure, brands and professionalization of companies that [is attractive] to emerging economies," Mr. Larsen added.

For private-equity firms selling their consumer businesses, Chinese acquirers are expanding the potential buyer universe. Although interest from Chinese bidders is expanding, Western buyers still largely have an edge, given the lack

of language and cultural barriers. That advantage may be starting to change, however.

"In auctions where PE sponsors play a role, you have to be nimble and you have to be fast," said Oliver Brahmst, a partner and global co-head of private equity at law firm White & Case LLP. "Chinese buyers are getting better at auctions and making decisions faster."

To be fair, Chinese acquirers are still learning to compete against Western bidders in sale processes for consumer brands. Some are sealing traditional buyout transactions while others are teaming up.

For example, Chinese family office Fortune Fountain Capital in June acquired a controlling stake in fine crystal glassware maker Baccarat from Starwood Capital Group and L Catterton. Meanwhile, Bain Capital in January partnered with Shanghai-listed supermarket operator Yonghui Superstores Co. to acquire retail-services firm Daymon Worldwide Inc.

"I don't think it's a zero-sum game. A lot of deals are going through co-investments or partnership models where local private investors invest together with U.S. investors," said Mr. Zhou.

Chinese bidders may not dominate the consumer deal world just yet as they continue writing their playbooks. But deep-pocketed Chinese buyers will keep looking beyond their own backyards for brands largely because there simply aren't enough targets in the region. As they remain willing to write big checks, they could become dark horses in the consumer sector.

"They will become a very powerful force and will become better at this M&A game, so we all better count them in," Mr. Brahmst said.

MEAL-KIT

continued from 4

on the lookout for reasonable valuations, private-equity investors are surely scanning the space for both consolidation and turnaround plays.

El Segundo, Calif.-based Chef'd targeted both financial and strategic investors throughout its

capital-raising process, said industry observers familiar with the matter, adding that many meal-kit providers are eagerly looking to test the market.

Some private-equity and growth-equity firms took a pass on Chef'd because of concerns surrounding the crowded and competitive nature of the meal-kit sector, these people further said. Although investors have recognized

the value of the sector, they have also found it challenging to find opportunities with a differentiated edge, whether they be price points or ingredients.

More investment opportunities surely will emerge as the space matures. But it remains to be seen exactly to what extent private equity will be willing to add some spice to growth trajectory of the meal-kit provider industry.

TALE

continued from 5

Keep things tense

The best stories also take advantage of how the brain works. We are programmed to respond to stories that build empathy for the main character, says Mary Gale, a Babson College lecturer, citing research by Paul Zak of Claremont Graduate University.

In additional research, Dr. Zak showed that a story that sustains tension and thus engages the brain longer increases the probability that listeners will “come to share the emotions of the characters in it.”

“Perhaps the listener becomes motivated to tell others about the

presenter’s products or services. A potential investor who heard and was enchanted by a venture’s compelling character story may recommend that his partners take a deeper look at the company,” says Ms. Gale.

Along with tension, Dr. Zak says, the brain responds to stories with relatable characters. They “result in a better understanding of the key points a speaker wishes to make and enable better recall of these points,” he says.

Dr. Zak cites a commercial for Guinness beer that features a bar with an empty chair. It “initially draws us into a mystery: Why is the chair empty? It deepens the mystery when the chair remains empty and the barmaid does not allow the

empty chair to be moved. This builds tension that we can see neurologically,” he says.

Because the mystery is about a person—the unknown patron who will sit in the empty chair—“it has a social component that we find builds emotional connection—oxytocin release—as the story continues,” Dr. Zak says. The tension is released when we finally learn that the chair is for a soldier, whom the crowd salutes when he arrives.

Dr. Zak adds that it’s important to take advantage of the effect a story has created by including an explicit call to action at the end, like buying a product or calling for more information. “Otherwise you lose the ability to influence the viewer,” he says.

SECURITY

continued from 6

vice president for the Chamber of Commerce’s National Security & Emergency Preparedness Department, told WSJ Pro that the act would drive growth in the economy by helping businesses with limited resources protect themselves from cyberthreats.

The bill also received early support from the Information Technology

Industry Council, an advocacy group whose members include Apple Inc., the security vendor Symantec Corp., and International Business Machines Corp.

“Small businesses often don’t have the resources they need to guard against sophisticated cyberattacks, and this legislation can be the helping hand small businesses need to help reduce their cybersecurity risks,” said Andy Halataei, ITI’s senior vice president for government affairs. “By offering

small businesses federal agencies’ resources and coordinated support, they can better manage risks, protect customer privacy, and focus on growing their ventures.”

The House will likely vote on the bill in the next few months, according to a policy expert who helped craft the legislation. Florida Rep. Daniel Webster introduced a similar bill in April called the NIST Small Business Cybersecurity Act to the House’s Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

LEGACY

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They oversee a trust that owns Washington Cos., an umbrella for the businesses. Independent chief executives answer to Larry Simkins, the CEO of Washington, and to their own boards.

“He’s met a lot of multigenerational families, and he learned from their successes and mistakes,” says Byron Trott, an adviser to wealthy families and companies, including Berkshire. “He doesn’t take things off the shelf.”

Mr. Simkins says each CEO is given wide latitude but held accountable for growth and return on invested capital. The trustees focus on how to invest cash the businesses generate.

They made their biggest move this year with the purchase of Dominion Diamond Corp. Mr. Batchelder, who had looked at Dominion when he was an activist, brought the idea to Mr. Washington and led the negotiations along with Mr. Simkins. The deal is expected to close in the fourth quarter.

The trustees also will pick the next group of leaders, and Mr. Washington is seeking to instill in them his way of thinking. He advocates long-term investment, like the Canadian contract to build noncombat vessels for the Coast Guard and Navy.

He credits spending on local communities and employees for saving him from union trouble. He has sought to avoid public markets because he wants to own his businesses “forever” and questions investors’ willingness to back him consistently.

Mr. Washington has no title and sits silently at board meetings. Afterward, the others ask him what he would have done differently.

“We are practicing for the inevitable,” Mr. Simkins says.

The day doesn’t seem too close.

Neither Mr. Washington’s age nor a bout with polio as a boy that still affects one leg slows him down much as he takes a reporter around his Vancouver properties. An avid tennis player, he is preparing for an annual tournament against a team led by another friend, Bill Gates.

Despite his high-profile connections and his success, Mr. Washington avoids attention, and keeps away from politics and stock investing. “Big shot” is a term he uses pejoratively.

Mr. Washington made his first real fortune buying a bankrupt copper mine in Butte, Mont., in 1985, and he got a lucky break when prices for copper soared. Washington expects to keep mining copper for about 45 more years.

He laments some missed deals—wishing he had done more in railroads—and the one big one he landed. Washington bought Raytheon Co.’s construction-machines business in 1999. A legal mess over contracts Raytheon hadn’t finished led to a bankruptcy. Mr. Washington

says he could have done a better job anticipating that risk.

Mr. Washington’s one attention-grabbing habit has long been yachts. His largest, the *Attesa IV*, stretches 330 feet and has about 18,000 square feet of living space and an orange chandelier from famed glass sculptor Dale Chihuly. It is estimated to have cost more than \$200 million.

Still, friends say he is frugal and gives away vast portions of his fortune. He will host movie stars—Vince Vaughn and Mel Gibson kept him up late recently on his smaller *Attesa III* yacht—but favors Kokanee Glacier beer, a locally brewed beverage.

And he hates losing any money frivolously. On Mr. Washington’s private golf course, designed by Robert Trent Jones Jr., Mr. Hanks once had a short putt to win a minor wager. When he missed, Messrs. Hanks and Washington had to pay Mr. Batchelder \$20.

Months later, waiting for a meeting with U.K. officials at 10 Downing St., Mr. Washington was still lamenting the miss, Mr. Hanks recalls.



KAMIL BIALOUS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Despite Mr. Washington’s high-profile connections and success, he avoids attention, and keeps away from politics and stock investing.

MIDSTREAM

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Five Point Capital Partners in February invested \$176.4 million in a midstream joint venture with producer Matador Resources Co. The venture aims to expand a gas-processing plant, among other plans.

Then there is water. Besides gas, oil wells often produce a good deal of water, which in certain areas in the Permian can reach four barrels for every barrel of oil produced, according to experts. That means a huge volume of

water, given that oil production in the Permian is near 2.5 million barrels a day.

The need to manage all that water creates more investment opportunities for private-equity firms. Tailwater Capital, for one, said last year it invested \$80 million to finance the expansion in the Permian and other regions of Goodnight Midstream LLC, which provides water-handling and saltwater disposal services to oil-and-gas companies. Five Point's joint venture with Matador also includes water disposal facilities.

How long will the Permian boom last? Recent declines in oil prices and inves-

tor concerns about increasing oil production in the U.S. make that difficult to say. For now, with exploration still profitable at current oil prices thanks to the Permian's favorable economics, private equity should find more midstream opportunities as undeterred producers move, according to Mr. Ozkan, "from exploration phase to development phase."

"The exploration phase doesn't require as much infrastructure, but when you move to full-on development mode, you need the infrastructure to make sure that your unit cost is as low as possible," he said.

GENERALS

continued from 9

Rather than barking orders and enforcing hierarchy, military leaders who succeed in the corporate world know how to coax different groups into collaborating, says retired Army Maj. Gen. Michael J. Diamond, an organizational leadership consultant.

Before her retirement in 2013, Maj. Gen. Suzanne Vautrinot led the U.S. Air Force's cyber operations. She has parlayed that expertise into board seats at companies such as Wells Fargo and water treatment- and cleaning-products maker Ecolab Inc.

Like many senior officers in the private sector, Gen. Vautrinot urges others not to use her Air Force title, and instead call her "Zan." Ecolab Chief Executive Doug Baker says her disarming style lets her push her points without ruffling feathers. "Think about that generation of women generals," he says. "You have to have pretty good [emotional intelligence] skills, and she does."

Gen. Vautrinot says she examines company strategies much like military leaders are trained to do: "You're looking at the future and connecting

the dots, and you're looking at the risks," she said. "If the assumptions that went into the strategy change, how do you think about adjusting?" The approach "isn't unique to me as a military member," she says, "but it is inherent."

Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling brought disparate brigades and regiments into a cohesive force as commander of the U.S. Army Europe. Similar challenges awaited when he joined Florida Hospital in 2013. Hired to develop idea-exchanges and other partnerships abroad, he soon after was asked to devise a leadership course for doctors, in part to improve collaboration with administrators and get physicians more involved in broader decisions at the 32,000-employee hospital group.

Gen. Hertling's course culminates in several dozen doctors, nurses and administrators going to Gettysburg, Pa., each year. There, he assigns each to be a different figure in the pivotal Civil War battle; afterward the staff discuss how the lessons apply to health care. "They really dig into that person's personality and see how their achievements or dysfunctions contributed to the bigger disaster or accomplishment," he says.

Generals learn lessons, too. After retiring from the Army seven years

ago, Lt. Gen. Stephen Speakes developed enterprise strategy at financial-services firm USAA for three years before he was let go. In hindsight, he says he failed to grasp the need to build consensus around his decisions and didn't recognize when colleagues weren't on board.

"In my old days, I was a decision-making machine. It was a quick look around the room and if no one had objections, it was go," he says. "In the corporate world, once you make a decision, you have to continue to sell its execution."

Now rounding his fourth year as CEO of Kalmar Rough Terrain Center LLC, a Texas unit of cargo-equipment maker Cargotec, Gen. Speakes says he has learned to encourage staff input and allow time for them to get behind ideas.

He keeps up other practices honed during his 35-year military career, such as making sure he knows the situation on the ground, frequently holding company meetings on the plant floor. "When manufacturing companies get too big, the leaders leave the manufacturing floor," he says. But "the people on the line will tell you in a heartbeat what's going on and why."

BUDDY

continued from 8

meeting. They met three times in the glass-roofed conservatory of Ms. Bartz's suburban San Francisco mansion.

"She really took the time to walk me through things," Ms. Chang says. Ms. Bartz described the context for several board colleagues' beliefs, the complex global risks facing Cisco and the importance of observing board committees for months before Ms. Chang took a committee seat.

Ms. Bartz, former chief executive of Yahoo Inc. and Autodesk Inc., also recommended where the newcomer should sit in the boardroom "so I literally wouldn't be taking anyone's seat at the table," Ms. Chang says.

"That's the tiniest thing, but it is important."

Brent Saunders, a Cisco director since March, says he especially appreciates being mentored by industry veteran Michael Capellas. Like Ms. Bartz, Mr. Capellas has led big tech businesses.

"I come into Cisco certainly having very strong experience running public companies [though] not with a tremendous grasp of technology," says Mr. Saunders, CEO of drugmaker Allergan PLC. "They have a different vernacular."

Mr. Capellas briefed Mr. Saunders about why Cisco developed a new security service just before the board discussed the service's imminent launch. The mentor also talked about Cisco products, such as its switches—a technical term for networking hardware that puzzled Mr.

Saunders. He told Mr. Capellas he had seen the word in board briefing materials, but "didn't know what it was."

That mentoring session persuaded Mr. Saunders to propose a formal board buddy program for Allergan.

Board mentoring relationships sometimes take time to develop, especially when programs aren't highly structured. That proved true for Judy Bruner, a former finance chief who joined the board of semiconductor-equipment maker Applied Materials in 2016. Its mentorship effort is fairly informal, she says.

Ms. Bruner and her mentor, Dennis Powell, say they have forged a relationship, mainly through casual chats after board and committee meetings. This summer, she arranged a mentoring lunch with him.

ARISTOCRAT

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On a sunny Friday evening, locals and their Labradors and Londoners like my family and me crammed the picnic tables outside Holkham's pub-with-rooms, the handsome, brick-and-flint Victoria Inn. The cooks source the menu almost entirely from the estate: top scorers were the Holkham beef burgers and the chargrilled bacon I ate at breakfast the next morning. There's stiff competition for food in these parts. A 15-minute drive away, in Burnham Market, a collection of ivy-clad Georgian cottages surrounding a village green, we bought potted shrimp and dressed crab from a fishmonger whose accent could pass for an earl's, and picnicked beside the ice-cream-colored huts of Wells-next-the-Sea,

another wide, sandy beach on the Holkham estate.

I don't think the Queen lies awake at night worrying whether the gardener has remembered to water the vegetables at her Norfolk estate, Sandringham. Still she, too, throws open its grand doors to visitors between April and November, before traveling there herself for the Christmas holidays. I had expected the ground-floor rooms to which visitors are admitted to be lobotomized of personal details; instead, Sandringham offers an oddly intimate look at royal life (we were assured that, except for the carpets, the rooms are unchanged when the Queen stays). In the sitting room, we spotted a needlepoint cushion, given to the Duke of Edinburgh, that read "Good shots never grow up, they just pick up less birds." A large jigsaw puzzle lay half-finished on a

side-table. The Queen, we were told, is an enthusiastic puzzler, and encourages the staff to participate, but woe betide anyone who gets a piece wrong.

An Englishman's home is his castle—so goes the adage. At Sandringham, it's the other way around: Gilt and crystal chandeliers notwithstanding, this royal retreat feels like a home. But if I were the Queen, I'd break with protocol, flip the calendar and decree that summers and autumns, rather than winters, be spent at Sandringham. Swallows careening over the marshes; beaches flecked with pastel huts and crab shacks; the evening light gilding everything and everyone—it's not hard to see why Desmond MacCarthy, the Earl of Leicester and the other titled homeowners of north Norfolk cling so keenly to their money-pit piles.



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