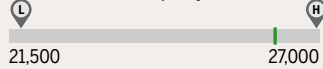


DOW JONES

39.00 to 26,218.13

Over the past year:



CRUDE OIL

\$0.12 to \$62.46

Over the past year:



Key:
 L — Past year's low
 H — Past year's high

Close; color indicates up/down from previous close

TECH GAINS POWER MARKETS HIGHER

Stocks recovered from a late-afternoon bout of selling on Wall Street to finish modestly higher Wednesday, giving the benchmark S&P 500 its fifth straight gain.

Technology stocks powered much of the rally, led by chip-makers. Retailers, home builders and hotel operators were among the big gainers. Energy companies, consumer goods makers and industrial stocks took the heaviest losses.

The rebound came in a mostly quiet week for market-moving news. That could change Friday, when the government issues its monthly tally of hiring by U.S. employers.

Investors were also gearing up for a new round of corporate earnings reports next week. Traders are expecting earnings to come in a little bit above current forecasts, said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA. "The remaining quarters of the year are currently forecast to be higher," he said.

The S&P 500 index rose 0.2 percent to 2,873.40. The index is now about 2 percent shy of its most recent all-time high reached on Sept. 20. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 39 points to 26,218.13. The Nasdaq composite, heavily weighted with technology stocks, climbed 0.6 percent to 7,895.55. — AP

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Eyeing a burly benefit

WrestleMania's back, and the area expects a 'windfall'

BY ALFONSO A. CASTILLO
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WrestleMania — pro wrestling's annual version of the Super Bowl — is making its return to the metropolitan area this week, bringing with it an "economic windfall" for the region and a unique opportunity for aspiring local wrestlers to get noticed.

More than 120,000 wrestling fans from all 50 states and more than 40 countries are expected to converge for WWE's WrestleMania 35, which will take place at New Jersey's MetLife Stadium on Sunday and feature such stars as "Rowdy" Ronda Rousey, Brock Lesnar and Kofi Kingston. This year's festivities will include four live events at Brooklyn's Barclays Center, and five days of the WWE's annual "Fan Axxess" convention, starting Thursday, at Pier 12 of the Brooklyn Cruise Terminal.

But some of the biggest attractions of WrestleMania are not put on by WWE, but rather by independent wrestling promoters looking to take advantage of the annual gathering of wrestling fans from around the world.

Dozens of events are planned in the area, including a live podcast Thursday night at Hicksville's Create a Pro Wrestling school hosted by WWE stars Curt Hawkins and Zack Ryder — both native Long Islanders.

Alex Reynolds of Patchogue,



Before WWE's event on Sunday in New Jersey, festivities include events at Barclays Center and a convention in Brooklyn, and a Hicksville podcast Thursday night, bringing a boon to the regional economy.

a trainer at the school who has been wrestling for independent promoters for a dozen years, plans to wrestle on at least three different shows, starting with Thursday's Evolve Wrestling event at the La Boom nightclub in Woodside, Queens.

"You're going to get a lot of awareness of yourself out there, which is a plus and builds your name among the fan base," said Reynolds, 32, who noted that wrestling promoters from as far away as England, Germany and Japan will all be in the area this week. "I feel like it's one of the biggest networking weekends there is."

As evidence of the career-making potential of WrestleMania events, Reynolds pointed to his longtime friend Tony Nese, of Ridge, who wrestled on four shows in three

days when WrestleMania was last in town six years ago.

"That was kind of my breakout moment, when my name started to be noticed outside of the Northeast area," Nese said.

The notoriety Nese gained that weekend eventually led him to try out for, and be hired by, WWE. On Sunday Nese will challenge for the WWE cruiserweight championship in front of more than 70,000 expected fans at WrestleMania 35.

The last WrestleMania to be held at MetLife Stadium, 2013's WrestleMania 29, generated \$101.2 million for the region, the WWE estimated. Last year's WrestleMania created an estimated \$175 million in new spending for its host city, New Orleans, contributing to Forbes' listing the event among its top 10 most valuable sporting event

brands in the world.

The event has become such an "economic windfall" that cities engage in annual bidding wars for WrestleMania, said John Saboor, WWE's executive vice president of special events, who noted that the company is already negotiating with potential hosts for WrestleMania through 2025.

Fans "have embraced every part of the weeklong celebration. They have also put great weight in experiencing all that our host region . . . has to offer," said Saboor, who expects that support to be particularly strong as WWE holds the event in its longtime base market. The New York region has hosted multiple WrestleMania events over the last 34 years, including at the Nassau Coliseum in 1986.

Plan to streamline Nassau building approvals



County Executive Laura Curran says a panel will eye the process.

County Executive Laura Curran on Wednesday said Nassau County has launched a "blue ribbon panel" that will focus on streamlining development approvals. The effort is aimed at attracting new businesses and encouraging economic development.

The committee includes business leaders and elected officials.

The panel will provide recommendations on the Department of Public Works' 239-F permitting application and approval

process. The 239-F process affects any construction project that fronts a Nassau County road.

"This complex and antiquated process has created immense challenges and delayed construction projects for everyone from mom-and-pop business owners to large corporations to single family homeowners in Nassau County," Curran said in a statement.

The county executive's office said that on average it takes from 12 to 24 months for a construction project to be ap-

proved. The DPW attributes the lag to antiquated and limited technology, low staffing levels and outside engineers not meeting county requirements.

The panel will examine the DPW's procedures and resources, use of technology and its fee structure. It will also explore opportunities to modernize the DPW process.

The panel's co-chairs are Ken Arnold, the commissioner of the DPW, and Kyle Strober of the Association for a Better Long Island. — DAVID REICH-HALE