



STIFEL *Bits*

July 02, 2025

The Appetizer

“Yeah, I’m pretty sure this is it.”

– 41-year-old Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback [Aaron Rodgers](#) on whether this upcoming NFL season will be his last.

Now, on to the numbers. Drum roll, please ...

- **16.31 billion:** The average number of monthly visits to google.com between March and May, making it the most visited website in the U.S.
- **\$592.5 billion:** The total amount given to [U.S. charities](#) in 2024, up 6.3% from 2023, hitting a new record!
- **21 miles:** The width of the narrowest point of the Strait of Hormuz, a critical chokepoint through which approximately 20% of the world’s oil and gas flows.
- **39:** The number of years Microsoft Excel has been in use. Unlike Aaron Rodgers, we think Excel still has plenty of seasons left in its playbook.
- **15:** The number of [sets of twins](#) in one high school graduating class in New York.

Dig In

“Defense Spending Surge”

NATO, the 32-country, “you mess with one of us, you mess with all of us” alliance, is back in the spotlight. Last week, members agreed to raise their defense spending goals, with a new push toward spending **5% of GDP**, up from the long-standing 2% target.

Why the change? Rising [global tensions](#), Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and China’s growing assertiveness have made national security a front-burner issue again. But here’s what’s different: Today’s defense spending isn’t just about tanks and fighter jets. [Increasingly](#), it’s about cybersecurity, AI, space technology, and digital infrastructure.

In fact, countries like [Germany](#) are already ramping up. Berlin boosted its defense budget by 28% in 2024 to nearly \$89 billion, while [NATO’s collective spending](#) is now topping \$1.3 trillion. That number could jump even higher as members work toward their new targets.

More spending means more investment in advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, and innovation. Who knows, all this spending makes me think there will be [humanoid robots](#) on the battlefield one day.

All of this to say, rising geopolitical tensions are driving a global surge in defense spending – not just among NATO members – shaping a future where security is as much about technology and innovation as it is about traditional military strength.

Weekly Specials

How many people are on Earth? Like 8.2 billion, right? Well ... maybe not. Turns out we may have *majorly miscounted* – rural areas alone were off by up to 84%! Whoops. I might be part of the problem ... I’ve been dodging the census like it’s a spam call. My bad, humanity.

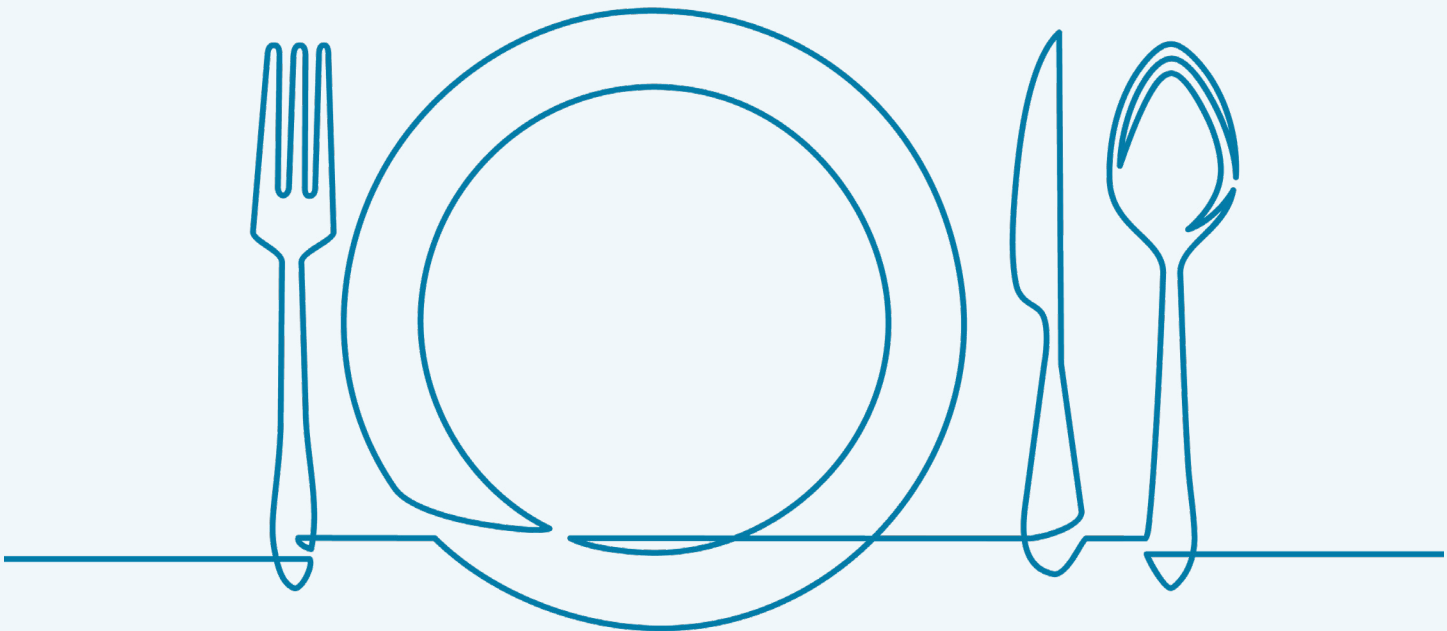
Last week’s 107-degree heat had us all sweating and asking: Should **you shut off the A/C** when you leave? Turns out – nope! Just bump it up **7–10 degrees**. It saves energy without turning your house into a sauna. Skip the ice box setting – your future sweaty self will totally appreciate it.

Labubu – that creepy little troll doll from Pop Mart – is taking over the world. Rihanna and Kim Kardashian are rocking them as bag charms, while superfans are on the hunt like it’s the Hunger Games. One mom even dropped \$1,600 for her son’s collection. Oh, and life-size Labubus sell for \$150,000.

Even killer whales love a little self-care. Drone footage shows southern resident **orcas** draping themselves in kelp and rolling around like it’s their personal spa day. Scientists call it “allokelping” – basically, kelp massages for whales.

Corporate Lunch

- **Starbucks** isn’t spilling the beans on China – confirming it will not sell its China operations. Still **brewing** big dreams in the Far East.
- The e-bike/e-scooter sharing service provider, **Lime**, is ready to roll onto Wall Street – **scooters** charged, IPO plans in motion, and no brakes in sight.
- The glaze is off: **McDonald’s** and **Krispy Kreme** are calling it **quits** on their doughnut duet. Starting July 2, your Egg McMuffin will have to go solo.
- The Senate passed a stablecoin bill, named the **Genius Act** ... Crypto finally gets its diploma, but Congress might leave it hanging at graduation.
- **Tesla’s** robotaxi has entered the chat – sleek, silent, and might lead you to **ghosting** your Uber app.
- Yet, **Uber** is going through a glow-up. Uber and **Waymo** just flipped the switch on **robotaxis** in Atlanta – self-driving **Jaguars** are now cruising in the Peach State, ready to pick you up with zero small talk.
- **Meta’s** putting ads in **WhatsApp** – because your **group chats** weren’t chaotic enough without a sponsored message sliding in mid-meme.
- **Amazon’s** turning Prime Day into Prime Days – four full days of deals, steals, and cart-filling chaos. Hope your wallet’s ready for a **marathon**, not a sprint.



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